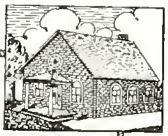

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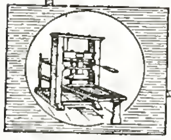

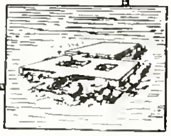

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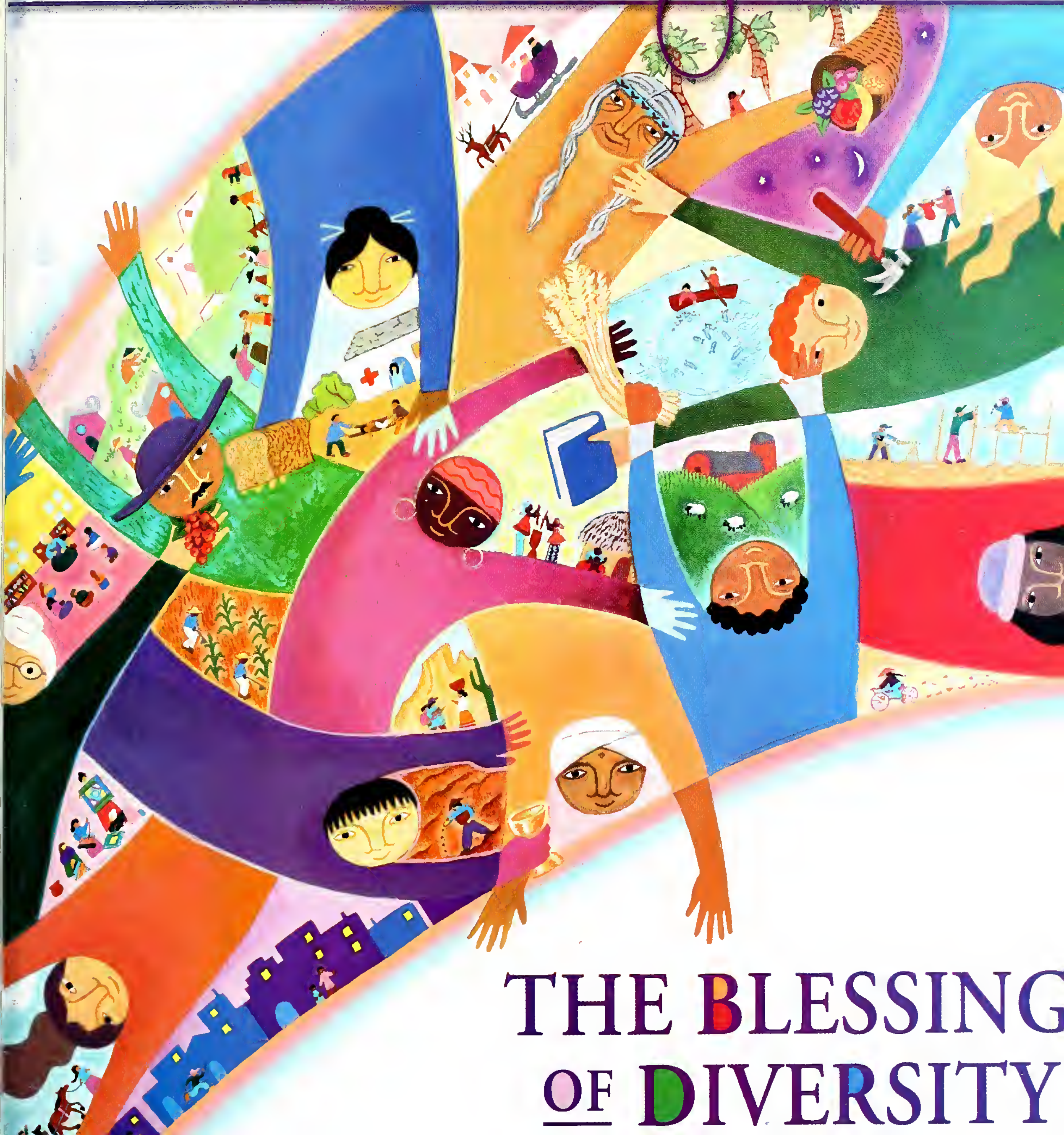

THE BLESSING OF DIVERSITY

Details from cover illustration © Durga

As God reaches out to touch us,
we are changed; as we reach out to touch
the world, we are changed once again,
and the world is changed through God working in us.

Give help. Give hope. Give life. Give now

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Church of the Brethren offering on March 14 for General Board ministries
of development and response to refugees, hunger, and disaster.

Messenger

Vol. 148, No. 1 January/February 1999 www.brethren.org

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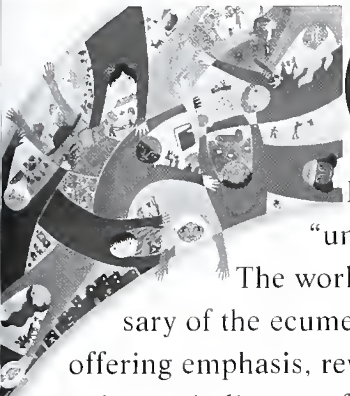

On the cover: This month's cover is by the artist Durga Bernhard, of Red Hook, N.Y., celebrating what she calls the "undeniable interconnectedness of life." The work, commissioned for the 50th anniversary of the ecumenical One Great Hour of Sharing offering emphasis, reveals in its detail a marvelous human mosaic, reminding us of the blessing of diversity, the theme of this month's lead articles which begin on page 9. The artist's sweep of bright colors is reminiscent of the rainbow, God's covenant of love. "Red and yellow, black and white, all are precious in His sight." Please note that details from the cover art are highlighted on the inside front cover, opposite this page, reminding readers that One Great Hour of Sharing comes up in March, another opportunity to celebrate the blessing of diversity.

Coming next issue

The March issue features a firsthand report from the Church of the Brethren delegation to he recent Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Marianne Sackett

Features

9 What we can do about diversity

The January birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the February observance of Black History Month are occasions to ask what the church can do to promote equality for ethnic minorities. In this series by Jeanne Jacoby Smith, Brethren pastors offer ideas of ways to build a more inclusive church that enjoys the blessing of diversity.

16 Young adults look inward

Through Walt Wiltschek's report, readers may join the 100 young adults who gathered in November for the annual denominational gathering under the theme, "Looking In, Reaching Out."

18 Ministry Summer Service

Now in its fourth year, this exciting program gives interns a chance to serve a church under a mentor for 10 weeks. And it gives churches a role in calling and shaping those exploring ministry. Lives are changed on both sides.

20 Congregations need ethics, too

Is your church a good employer? Does your church obey the law—even copyright law? These questions and others received spirited discussion during a series of workshops in Virlina District. Congregational Life Teams helped bring about these and other events reported here.

23 Lying, perjury, and Jesus

With all the attention to lying under oath in high places, ordinary lying may not seem so bad. Here Dale W. Brown puts perjury into Brethren perspective, and explains why oaths don't help the cause of truth.

Departments

2 From the Publisher
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From the Publisher

While I was out of the country for several weeks, my e-mail inbox crashed and burned. No, this problem had nothing to do with Y2K. Apparently the inbox developed a continuous loop, sending itself thousands of pieces of mail. Eventually it tied the office network up in knots. Though our computer experts tried to save the contents of the inbox, everything was lost.

Since there wasn't anything I could do about it, I found myself moving quickly from regret to relief. After all, I had expected to spend a day or more reading the hundreds of messages that would have piled up during my absence. Instead, I spent my first days back catching up with old-fashioned mail from the post office and the fax machine.

I'll never know what I missed, and I hope that most of my electronic correspondents knew I was out of town. But there was one thing I didn't mind losing: There's a nice void where I used to have a backlog of old mail. It's not that e-mail is bad. It's just that I hang on to too many of the old messages. I had an embarrassing amount stored in case I ever needed to refer to it, and frankly was having trouble keeping the quantity under control. Suddenly, that was all taken care of.

I rather like the symbolism of starting the new year with a clean slate. Perhaps I can keep my new inbox tidy, since it isn't yet inhabited by my old habits.

Perhaps I will be inspired to delete those things in my life that keep me from moving forward.

Perhaps I will recognize my folly when I get caught in continuous loops that siphon off energy into fruitless efforts.

While losing a month's worth of correspondence is drastic, maybe I can use the experience to remind myself of the importance of leaving the past behind and moving energetically into the future. I want to remember the past, but not cling to the past. "Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal. . ." (Phil. 3:13).

In the meantime, please forgive me if I neglected to answer your recent mail. Blame it on premillennial tribulation.

Wendy McFadden

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Artist Eric Davis *began this painting at the beginning of a worship service last November at La Verne Church of the Brethren and finished it at the close of worship.*

La Verne artist's work is "In God's Hands"

The **Alternative Christmas Faire** of the La Verne (Calif.) Church of the Brethren raised $10,700 to benefit Church World Service, Heifer Project, Habitat for Humanity, and Pomona-Inland Valley Council of Churches. The painting "In God's Hands," by Eric Davis, brought $1,000 in the silent auction.

Kentucky Mountain Housing director retires

M. Dwayne Yost, the founder and executive director of Kentucky Mountain Housing Development Corporation, retired in December after 25 years in that position. The Church of the Brethren was influential in helping to begin Kentucky Mountain Housing, which has built more than 500 houses and rehabbed 365 more for low-income families in southeastern Kentucky. Yost writes that the housing work began in 1973 after the Church of the Brethren and Red Bird Mission, affiliated with the United Methodist Church, agreed to pay his salary for a year. Then the Church of the Brethren SHARE program contributed $100,000 over 5 years toward the construction of the initial houses. Wil Nolen, who represented the Church of the Brethren during those beginning efforts and is now president of Brethren Benefit Trust, was present for Kentucky Mountain Housing's 25th anniversary celebration in October.

Yost plans to continue his life of service as pastor of two rural churches, Flat Creek Church of the Brethren and Mud Lick Church of the Brethren, both near Manchester, Ky.

Friend of MESSENGER honored

Lois Myers of the Broadwater Church of the Brethren, Essex, Mo., was honored recently for 41 years of service as the congregation's MESSENGER representative.

A friend writes: "For many years this small rural church had 100 percent MESSENGER subscriptions. MESSENGER has been our window to the brotherhood and the activities of our missionaries around the world. Members tell of sharing their MESSENGER with non-members when the Women's Agricultural Extension club would meet in their home."

Frank Keath's faith reflected in music

"Music draws me in. For me, music is worship." That's how Frank Keath accounts for a unique ministry that has touched the lives of many people in his church and community.

Music for Frank began with singing in high school and at Elizabethtown (Pa.) College, where he joined student deputation teams that visited churches. His singing continued when he became a member of the Chambersburg (Pa.) Church of the Brethren. Besides serving there as youth choir director for 12 years, he has been both soloist and faithful member of the church choir and recently became part of a newly formed eight-voice chorale.

Frank finds in music a way to testify to his faith in Jesus Christ. In recent years, this testimony has taken the form of concerts that include dramatized interpretations of Christ's life, death, and resurrection. He enlists the help of fellow church members and friends as actors, musicians, and other participants to bring the words and music to life. Most of these concerts have been offered as benefits for a variety of people and causes. One of his concerts took place at the 1996 Annual Conference in Cincinnati. Volunteering time, talent, and the funds to produce these concerts has become a major commitment for Frank and his wife Mary Sue.

Frank Keath

What does he hope will happen at his concerts? "I want the people who attend to strengthen their relationship with Christ," Frank says. "I always include an invitation for people to make a commitment or a recommitment to Him." He counts as one of his personal rewards the way he has seen these concerts draw participants together as they plan, rehearse, and offer their gifts.

Encouraged by a musician friend, Frank has begun writing his own songs. He usually composes with the help of his guitar. When asked which comes first, the words or the tune, he says it varies. "Sometimes I have a tune running through my head and I find words to go with it; other times I write the words first and then write the music."

The results of his creative work can be heard on his first CD, "As You Are." Seven of the 10 songs on it are his own compositions. He has been working on more songs for another possible CD.

What lies ahead? "I hope for an opportunity to take this ministry into other communities," Frank says. He has no illusions about achieving fame with his music. "Whether or not that happens is no big thing for me."

What is a "big thing" for him is the message in the songs he sings. "I want my music to help people of faith grow in Christ," Frank says. He says it with a quiet conviction that is evident in both his music and his life.

—Kenneth L. Gibble

(Inquiries about scheduling a concert, purchasing a CD, and other information can be addressed to Frank Keath, 1530 Wilson Ave., Chambersburg, PA 17201 or to e-mail address: fkeath@innernet.net.)

Fairview church marks 100 years of service

Fairview Church of the Brethren, Floyd, Va., observed its centennial in 1998. The church began in 1898 with members seated on logs where the present building now stands, according to *The Floyd Press*, which featured the church in a November article. The present building was built in 1900, a joint effort between Baptists and Brethren.

Glen Sage began as pastor of the congregation in November, succeeding Ralph Spradling, who died Aug. 29 last year. The church parking lot was paved and an accessibility ramp to the front entrance was added in Spradling's memory.

Greene church gathers at the river for baptism

More than 40 people from the Greene (Iowa) Church of the Brethren sang "Shall We Gather at the River" on the banks of the Shell Rock River last fall to witness Pastor Gene Burry baptize Mark and Mike Edwards. "It has been more than 50 years since the Church of the Brethren has sponsored a baptism in the Shell Rock," observed the local newspaper, which covered the event. Mike Edwards said he wanted to be baptized in a river because Jesus was baptized in a river.

Anabaptist Heritage Center being planned

Plans have been announced to build an Anabaptist Heritage Center on a 19-acre site at Harrisonburg, Va. The vision for the complex includes a museum and research center, a conference center, a restaurant, an inn, and gift shops. A committee hopes for a groundbreaking in mid-1999, according to an article in the Harrisonburg *Daily News Record*.

Five acres of land have been donated for the site. The 16-member steering committee for the center has recently been reconstituted to include half of its members to be Mennonites and half of them Brethren.

The center "will be a place to exhibit artifacts, to do research on our denominational histories, to reflect on our core faith values, and to celebrate our responses to the cultural and historical events of the past and present," writes Emmert F. Bittinger of Bridgewater, Va., a Brethren member of the steering committee.

Dean Egge *with sculpture.*

Christ sculpture is artist's anniversary gift to church

Dean Egge, a wood sculptor and member of the Williamson Road Church of the Brethren, Roanoke, Va., on Nov. 22 presented his congregation with a sculpture he had made for the church's 50th anniversary.

Egge comments on the sculpture: "About a year ago I made a sketch of a Christ-like figure for a sculpture I was going to give as a gift for the church anniversary. I looked for a log that had a Christ figure in it. After working on the sculpture for some time, I was ready to start developing the face. The face must express caring, humility, and understanding. I saturate myself with the feeling and attitude that I hope to sculpt. Then the gouge in my hand seems to respond and the face appears. The head and the hands form a triangle to remind us of the Trinity. The body is clothed in a tunic and a cloak. The Christ-figure seems to say, 'I am the Truth, believe my words and you will be blessed.'"

Egge is a longtime member of the Association for the Arts in the Church of the Brethren .

"In Touch" profiles Brethren we would like you to meet. Send story ideas and photos to "In Touch," Messenger, *1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120.*

Church responds to Central America, Caribbean disasters

The Church of the Brethren continues to respond to the many needs created by hurricanes Georges and Mitch, which struck the Caribbean and Central America in late fall.

The General Board has sent former staff member Yvonne Dilling to Central America to assess the needs, plan the Board's long-term response, and assist organizations that have been partners with the Brethren. Before long-term projects can be established, governments of affected countries must deal with such matters as repairing bridges and redesignating property, as entire sections of land were washed away.

Although firsthand assistance is not currently needed, Dilling said financial contributions to the General Board's Emergency Response/Service Ministries for the relief effort are needed.

A grant of $50,000 from ER/SM's Emergency Disaster Fund was approved to support rebuilding projects in the Dominican Republic, following Hurricane Georges. Fourteen people from McPherson College, led by Brethren Dale Minnich, were to spend 17 days there in January cleaning and making home repairs.

ER/SM is establishing a recovery project in the Dominican Republic. Guillermo Encarnación, a Church of the Brethren member originally from the Dominican Republic, will spend about five weeks establishing the project. Jan and Roma Jo Thompson of Glendale (Ariz.) Church of the Brethren will serve as the project's initial directors. People interested in volunteering for the project should contact Jane Yount at jyount_gb@brethren.org or at 800-451-4407.

Glenn Kinsel of ER/SM has traveled to Puerto Rico twice recently to assess possible recovery efforts in response to Georges. One such project, in Caimito, is already underway under the supervision of Jorge Rivera, associate executive of Atlantic Southeast District.

A new Church of the Brethren disaster response project began in January in Castañer, Puerto Rico. Wilbur and Nancy Morris will serve as project directors, supervising rebuilding projects, particularly the replacement of roofs that were blown off by Hurricane Georges. Although volunteer slots are filled through March, workers are needed for April,

Brethren Volunteer Service Unit #230, *sponsored by Brethren Revival Fellowship, completed orientation at Roxbury, Pa.,in August. Front row: Ruby Shenk (orientation staff), Denise Negley, Jolene Lehman, Doris Bender. Back row: John Shenk (orientation staff), Ben Stover Barlow, Corby Russell, Dennis Bender. All six volunteers are serving in Lewiston, Maine. Ben Barlow and Jolene Lehman are serving at the Lewiston Area Mission School, while the rest are at the Good Shepherd Food Bank. This is Doris Bender's second time in BVS. She served in Lewiston in 1983/1984.*

May, and June.

The need for "Gifts of the Heart" kits and quilts in Central America continues to be great. Two 40-foot containers were sent to Honduras from the Brethren Service Center in New Windsor, Md. Together they weighed 30 tons and were filled with 18,750 health kits, nearly 12,000 quilts, and medical supplies.

A $3,000 allocation from the Emergency Disaster Fund was granted for work in western Ukraine. Through Church World Service, this money will assist victims of flooding caused by heavy rains.

Riemans head for tribal peace conference in south Sudan

A peace summit of unprecedented proportions between the Nuer and Dinka tribes in southern Sudan is planned for January and February, and is being attended by Phil and Louie (Louise) Rieman, pastors of Wabash (Ind.) Church of the Brethren.

The purpose of this conference, which grows out of accords reached in June, is to bring peace and unity between these tribal groups and to foster a climate where peace is possible on a wider basis. The gathering is the largest of its kind; the expected attendance of 2,000-6,000 will include 500-600 delegates. A cross section of the local population will be at the event — people representing the church and military communities as well as many others. The intent is to air grievances, tell stories, and reach a point of reconciliation where they can "kill the bull" for celebration.

"We hope many bulls die," said one Sudanese leader. The Riemans, who served as missionaries in Sudan for 3 1/2 years, have been granted a two-month leave from their pastorate. Their expenses are being covered by the General Board's Global Mission Partnerships Office. Many European and US church groups and individuals are expected to assist in supportive roles, like the Riemans, who will provide background coordinating assistance primarily from the New Sudan Council of Churches' offices in Nairobi.

N. Koreans gather acorns for food; clinics lack clean water

While the efforts of the international community have helped North Korea stave off an even worse food emergency, the east Asian nation still has a long way to go in order to feed its 23 million people. Even with a stable growing season, this past summer's grain harvest was over 1 million tons short of the 4.5 million tons needed to supply basic needs.

One welcome development is that there are signs that the North Korean government is more open to assistance in reforming its agricultural system to make it more productive.

A recent United Nations nutritional assessment highlighted the ongoing difficulties faced by North Korea. Some 62 percent of all children were found to be malnourished, including 30 percent of children between one and two experiencing moderate to severe malnutrition, which is likely to impair physical and mental development. At least 1 million people are thought to have perished from food-related maladies over the past 3 years.

Even places of healing need help, as the survey found that not one of 814 hospitals and clinics assessed had water fit for human consumption. Most hospitals also lacked medicines, had no glass to replace broken windows, and were colder inside than out, having received no coal since 1994.

On a recent trip to the troubled nation, Dr. Kim Joo, who has been a consultant for Brethren relief efforts, gave this firsthand vignette: "I saw tens of thousands of people gathering acorns in the mountains. They looked so miserable, they were starved, they were dirty, they slept right there on the mountain." Acorns are a welcome supplement to diets that regularly include cornstalks and straw.

The Church of the Brethren is not finished in its response to the North Korea crisis, according to Brethren Witness director David Radcliff, who manages the Global Food Crisis Fund. The Fund will be considering another major North Korean appeal in the coming months.

New ER/SM manager, other staff changes announced

Stanley Noffsinger has been named manager of the Church of the Brethren General Board's Emergency Response/Service Ministries, effective June 15.

Noffsinger has a bachelor's degree from Manchester College, North Manchester, Ind., a certificate in Total Quality Management from Wichita State University, and training and experience in international living. He is currently managing two medical clinics and is the physician placement coordinator for 11 locations in South Central Kansas.

Bob Pittman and Marianne Rhoades Pittman are serving as interim co-managers of ER/SM until Noffsinger takes over in June.

- Roger Golden has been named by the Association of Brethren Caregivers to serve as its coordinator of centralized services. Golden comes to this new position from Pleasant Hill Village, the Brethren home in Girard, Ill., where he served as chaplain and director of development. Golden will provide leadership to the Fellowship of Brethren Homes.
- Tim McElwee began Jan. 1 as Manchester College's vice president of institutional advancement. He had been serving the college as director of development.
- Sidney King, part-time executive of Idaho District, retired on Dec. 31. She had held this position since 1989.
- Sue Snyder's last day of employment with the Church of the Brethren General Board was Jan 8. Snyder joined the Board's staff in June 1988 and had been serving as assistant to the executive director.
- Manny Diaz resigned as part-time staff for the General Board's Area 4 Congregational Life Team, effective Jan. 31, to become campus minister at McPherson (Kan.) College.
- Don Myers has resigned as part-time staff for the Church of the Brethren General Board's Area 1 Congregational Life Team, effective Jan. 31. Myers joined the General Board staff in February.
- Nada Sellers has resigned as part-time staff for the Church of the Brethren General Board's Area 5 Congregational Life Team, effective Nov. 6. Sellers, who joined the General Board staff in January, is returning to hospice chaplaincy.
- John Thomas has been named financial resource counselor for the General Board's funding office. He will cover the Plains states. He was a regional director for CROP for 15 years, and was a teacher for 6 years and administrator for 16 years in the public schools of Missouri, Iowa, and Oklahoma.
- Kathryn Radcliff, of Elgin, Ill., resigned as president of Brethren Employees Credit Union, effective Oct. 31. While Radcliff remains with the credit union as collections manager, Josie Buan-Hickman is serving as interim office manager.

Boise or bust: Conference goes back to campus in 2003

The 2003 Church of the Brethren Annual Conference will be held July 5-9 at Boise State University in Idaho.

That decision, made late last year by the Annual Conference Program and Arrangements Committee, reflects the long-standing rotation schedule that calls for Conference to be held in the far northwest in 2003. It also is a response to an increasing call from Annual Conference attendees for the yearly meeting to be held again on a university campus. Annual Conferences through 2002 will each be held at convention centers.

Business and worship will be held at The Pavilion, a 9,000-seat arena, while exhibits and smaller meetings will be held nearby. Meals will be served in the student union. Housing will be available in dorms and in nearby inns and hotels.

Other Annual Conferences previously announced include: Milwaukee, June 29 - July 4, 1999; Kansas City, July 15-19, 2000; Baltimore, June 30 - July 4, 2001; Louisville, June 29 - July 3, 2002.

A new format is on tap for Annual Conference beginning in 2000. Instead of the traditional Tuesday-Sunday format, conferences of the future will begin Saturday evening and will conclude at noon Wednesday.

Shifting medical insurance may cost retirees more

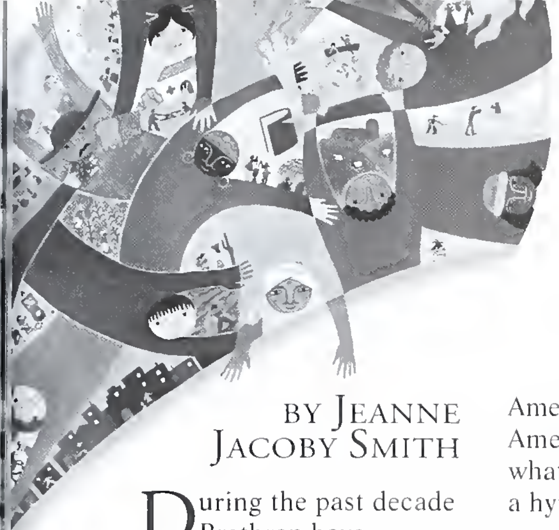
Church of the Brethren retirees whose pensions are with the Brethren Benefit Trust received a one-time additional payment on Dec. 15, 1998, which was equal to an extra month's benefit. This benefit was sent to all plan members who retired on or before Sept. 1. These members also received a one-percent increase for 1999.

These two benefits were approved by the Brethren Benefit Trust board, which met Nov. 20-21 in Lancaster, Pa. At that meeting the board learned that the Brethren Medical Plan staff is working to move all medical plan groups to fully insured insurance arrangements as quickly as possible. According to Jeff Garber, director of insurance plans, most agencies that have completed the transition have saved money.

For groups in the self-funded plan that are waiting for a fully insured arrangement, there will be no premium increase in 1999, as Garber anticipates having all groups converted to a fully insured arrangement by April.

The move to a fully insured medical plan has generated good news in the form of premium savings for active members. But most insurance companies do not want to cover the retired members. Thus, about 300 retirees of the Brethren Ministers Group received premium increases between 36 and 41 percent.

The board acknowledged that there is no long-term solution to the higher premiums. As a stopgap measure, it authorized using up to $550,000 from medical reserves to subsidize retiree premium costs over a two-year period.



Diversity at the corner of Poplar and Main

A call to action on inclusivity

BY JEANNE JACOBY SMITH

During the past decade Brethren have become aware of ethnic groups in their midst. Baltimore First Church of the Brethren generated the denomination's first black moderator, the late William Hayes. The Tokahookaadi Navajo church in New Mexico reminds us that Native Americans are among our numbers. Korean sisters and brothers on the West Coast have knocked on the denominational door asking for a church home.

It is thrilling to see what was once a German immigrant sect growing in diversity. Yet there is a paradox here, because long before we saw diversity in the North American church, the denominational door was open to include sisters and brothers from abroad.

Somehow it seemed appropriate to take the gospel to Africa, to Ecuador, to Haiti. But when it came to ministering to God's children of color at Poplar and Main, like other denominations with a preponderance of Euro-Americans, Brethren had problems.

Back in 1719 when Brethren settled in the colonies, they were people of the land clinging to Germanic world views to survive. As their descendants assimilated into American society, they suppressed the persecutions of past generations. Today, the church is opening itself to diversity because of the New Testament mandate to love. Yet the subtle reality remains: in day-to-day living, the church is entrenched in cultural norms that turn many minorities away.

If Christianity had come to North America through Africa or Latin America rather than through Europe, what form might it have taken? Such a hypothetical question might be considered moot until one examines future demographics. Experts say that by the year 2020 more than half the children in the United States will be something other than Caucasian. If the church continues to define itself by mainly Germanic perspectives, it could outgrow its function in tomorrow's world.

James Boyer, professor at Kansas State University and pastor of a predominantly black church, claims that "equity and diversity are fundamental elements of American ideology, but they have been violated consistently by most major American institutions." Brethren cannot hear Boyer's statement without feeling an element of chagrin for the church's sin of omission. At the local church door when Christians of color approach and say, "I believe," they often do not feel welcome and turn away.

For 290 years Brethren have stood tall when responding to a world in need. Did not the denomination found Church World Service, CROP, and Heifer Project? Are we not responsible for Brethren Volunteer Service? If we define our niche in Christendom, would it not be Service to others with a capital S?

The answer is an emphatic Yes. In outreach the church rates second to none. Then why do our churches lack diversity? If we do so well with outreach, might we need some help with inreach?

Building an inclusive church

Fifteen Brethren congregations with diverse memberships were asked the question, "What can churches do to create a welcoming atmosphere where persons of diverse backgrounds will feel at home?" Overwhelmingly, pastors agreed on four imperatives.

Define who you are as Brethren before engaging persons of multi-ethnic backgrounds.

"We live in a post-denominational world," says Frank Portee of Imperial Heights church in Los Angeles. "To attract and retain persons of all backgrounds, it is critical to define who the Brethren are."

Pastor Gilbert Romero of the Bella Vista congregation, also in Los Angeles, provides one definition: "peace, love feast, trine immersion, the priesthood of all believers, and the right of women and men to minister in the church."

Pastors who are straightforward about these issues when newcomers join the church avert serious conflicts later, he contends. "If everyone comes to the table with common understandings, all are winners."

"Brethren ideals dovetail with the multicultural vision," says Manny Diaz, pastor at the Lake Charles congregation in Louisiana. "The three ideals from Schwarzenau that we uphold are unconditional love, continual relevance of the Scriptures, and no force in religion." To focus on issues of peace, his baby boomer congregation erected a peace pole and sponsors events on racial harmony and peacemaking in the family.

Gerald Rhoades at Harrisburg (Pa.) First church cites social action and scriptural relevance as defining characteristics. "Our church represents an appealing middle ground resonating somewhere between Pentecostal and Catholic," he explains.

Lois Synder

Diversity is a summer picnic *with First Church, Chicago. Here is Jim Jones on the guitar and Katie Lerman on violin.*

"When the Brethren began in Germany, we did not conform to majority ways. Brothers and sisters of other cultures help us restore that perspective."

Chicago First church filters the Brethren identity through distinctively American issues. "Caucasian Brethren can only accept others as equals," says the pastor, Orlando Redekopp, "when they face unconscious racism and realize that privilege and power have come to them by virtue of the color of their skin." Such soul-searching enables the church to understand the anger and hurt that some diverse peoples bring with them.

James Eikenberry of ACTS Covenant Fellowship in Lancaster, Pa., concurs. "To be white in our society means you don't have to think about your identity. But being a person of color means thinking about it every day."

Brethren must be committed to accepting ethnically different persons as equals.

In the church the ethnically different person may experience rejection through subtle patterns of prejudice which ignore his or her existence. Many who live in low socioeconomic conditions or with racism are in a battle for survival emotionally, economically, and culturally. When they seek church homes, they need to feel wanted and valued. Do we ask persons of color to serve on church committees, to teach church school, to sit on the board? The church must invite persons of color to become active and welcome their perspectives when they do.

"Up-front minority leadership in the church must be out of proportion to its numbers in the congregation," says Gerald Rhoades. Diverse persons need visibility to assure newcomers that they will feel at home. Darius Smith, an African-American pastor with the Dundalk congregation in Baltimore, preaches every month, bringing his musical talents to the worship. Diverse congregations believe it is vitally important for minority children to see their parents and elders in leadership roles.

Chicago First church aspires toward a strong African-American leadership core. Sixty-five percent of its members are black, with the remainder Hispanic and Anglo. The latter group constitutes the majority of college-educated members. To maintain balance, the congregation includes non-college people in leadership roles. "There may be rough edges, but the church's commitment is intentionally multicultural," says Redekopp.

Gilbert Romero suggests that congregations send delegates of color to Annual Conference and District Conference.

Because of differences in the way some cultural groups express their faith, churches must be willing to vary traditional worship styles.

Traditional Euro-American worship services create an objective separation of the person and the message. Many cultures, however, rely upon oral fluency and human relationships to transmit important values. Formal, prescribed litanies and prayers directly conflict with socialization styles of many ethnic groups.

Here Brethren can learn from history: Throughout the centuries the church has blossomed most prolifically when the gospel assimilated to the cultures it wished to serve.

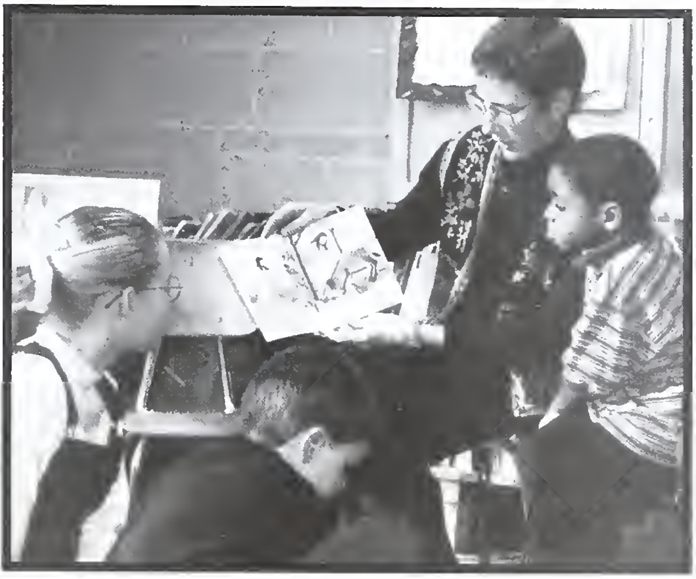
What might this mean for the church? First, Euro-American Brethren should not deny their western acculturation. They can, however, enhance Sunday worship, the avenue by which they reach most people first, by sensitively incorporating multicultural elements into services on a regular basis. Simple, inclusive acts give ethnic minorities points of identification, the feeling that "this is my church, too."

Wayne Sutton of Miami First church in Florida suggests that churches regularly ask their diverse members to pray the congregational prayer, sing solos, and preach. "In our congregation we've found a blend of styles that allows all members to worship in their traditions sometimes."

The Cornerstone Christian congregation in Lebanon, Pa., adapted its style to appeal to African-Americans and Latinos. To accomplish this, the church incorporated Congo drums and synthesizers. "For one who sings opera as I do," says pastor Bob Krouse, "it's a radical change."

Lake Charles (La.) and ACTS Covenant (Lancaster, Pa.) also moved to contemporary music, with the Lancaster group drawing heavily on African and Latino themes. Lake Charles, which targets baby boomers, features contemporary drama and rock music in their services. Manny Diaz, pastor, facetiously relates that "members think Jesus was a Cajun: they have gumbo for love feast."

The Lower Miami congregation in Dayton, Ohio, has not altered its worship style, but rather focuses on black Brethren heroes and African-American history, especially during Black History Month in February. Pastor Ron McAdams explains, "We sing the black national anthem, 'Lift Every Voice and Sing,' from the Brethren hymnal every chance we get." The church has been a multicultural congregation since the 1950s, when it lost many of its members to the suburbs.


Jeanne Jacoby Smith

Janelle Clary *reads to children from the McPherson (Kan.) Church of the Brethren.*

The church must enrich every aspect of programming with multicultural content.

What do minorities think when they see themselves reflected in the mirror of the church? Do church school curricula reflect diversity, from implicit messages of pictures on the page to explicit messages taught in content?

Just as children learn about John Kline, William Beahm, Anna Mow, and other Euro-Brethren, so should they learn about minority heroes and heroines. Samuel Weir, former slave, became an ordained Brethren minister in Frankfort, Ohio, in 1881. John T. Lewis, a black Brethren, was prototype for Mark Twain's Jim in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.*

For some years, Messenger has published articles on prominent ethnic leaders — the late William Hayes, Frank Ramirez, and Barbara Cuffie, among others. Authentic research calls not just for articles about these people, but for writings from their perspectives, too. While stories of German roots must be recounted so that Euro-American members recall who and why they are, the church must honor others' traditions for they also have histories to share.

A final question persists. If the church opens itself to diverse influences, will that not change the Brethren identity? Will Brethren still be Brethren?

The answer is yes, of course. And no.

Like multiple circles overlapping, we will celebrate each others' personal journeys, yet blend together at the point of faith.

German roots have shaped how Brethren think and worship for nearly 300 years. As the 21st century dawns, change beckons. Together we must redefine our heritage and open our eyes to a bright new day.

Jeanne Jacoby Smith, a member of the McPherson Church of the Brethren, McPherson, Kan., is assistant professor of English and curriculum and instruction at McPherson College.

Urban Ministries meeting to address concerns of minorities

"Urban Ministries Consultation" is the prosaic name being given to an exciting grassroots gathering planned for Feb. 19-21 in Kansas City, Kan. The meeting will bring together Church of the Brethren persons interested in pressing the denomination to become more ethnically inclusive.

"We are marginalized and not really acknowledged," says Belita Mitchell, an ethnic minority and member of the Imperial Heights congregation in Los Angeles. "There are some in our denomination who don't have any interest in becoming more inclusive."

The planned consultation grew out of discussions among people whose ethnic church experiences "have left them feeling a great need for support, sharing, healing, and bridgebuilding," according to conference materials. The theme is "Clothed with Christ in Diversity and Unity." Meetings will be at First Central Church of the Brethren in Kansas City. For more information call 913-281-3760.

Organizers say some who had worked on ethnic and minority issues in the past were embittered by some decisions that were made and initiatives dropped during the General Board redesign process. They hope to not only discuss problems of the past but to form a coalition that will work on new programs.

Mitchell said the Church of the Brethren will be stronger when it finds ways to be more open to minorities. "We have had far too many churches closing because they refused to open up and invite those who are coming into the area different from themselves," she said. "In many cases, Sunday morning is still one of the most segregated times in America."

Where does your church go from here?

How can your church create a welcoming atmosphere where persons of diverse backgrounds will feel at home?

In three short years, Jesus transformed a Samaritan, Levite, tax collector, fishermen, and countless others into his disciples. Surely we, as his church, can do the same.

Pastors in our survey suggested guidelines for churches committed to changing their complexions. To help your church bridge the culture gap, 10 are listed below.

Discern the type of congregation that meets your community's needs.

Pastor Frank Portee, Imperial Heights church, Los Angeles, suggests paid interpreters for second-language speakers. Currently, his mostly black congregation shares its facility with a Latino group, but his dream is to strengthen relationships so they can build a team ministry, making worship services accessible through interpreters.

The Lincoln (Neb.) congregation engages an English-as-a-second-language teacher to lead a Sunday school class where the Bible is read in Cambodian, then discussed in English.

"First-generation Cambodians came to church out of gratitude," says co-pastor Christy Dowdy. "Now, the second generation is searching the Scriptures to learn why they are here." Dowdy claims the Sunday school class has drawn families back to the fold. Finding Christian education resources in the Cambodian language remains a major challenge.

To promote the "priesthood of all believers," ACTS Covenant Fellowship, Lancaster, Pa., divides its congregation into small house churches led by non-salaried house church pastors. Several from diverse backgrounds bring their gifts to the congregational mix.

Miami First church in Florida rotates leadership on Sunday mornings. Worship follows a basic form but is shaped by whoever serves as worship leader and preacher of the day.

According to Wayne Sutton, this has yielded a "worship model that is neither black nor white, but a true worship experience which comes from the honest expression of all the members. It means," he continues, "some traditional sermons and some rousing, amen-evoking sermons. It means singing 'Wade in the Water' led in the spiritual style by a black sister . . . during a fairly traditional Brethren feetwashing service. We have come to love these aspects of worship."

Be sensitive to first impressions.

Does your church have stained glass windows with only Caucasian figures? A Presbyterian church in Decatur, Ga., tinted the Christ figure at the altar brown and kept the Jesus in the rear of the sanctuary white. Their motto reflected their sensitivity: Religion should be colorblind.

Music is another lens through which we experience God. *Hymnal: A Worship Book* offers a marvelous array of multicultural melodies and translations. Yet how many churches incorporate multi-language lyrics or nontraditional instruments into worship on a regular basis? God's love is transmitted to the greatest number when we use every avenue possible to communicate that love.

Care.

Take someone to lunch. Befriend diverse persons in everyday life. Press to the edge of your comfort zone. Persons of color go into the white world, but whites seldom reciprocate. Relating to people as friends first, regardless of ethnicity, creates opportunities to invite them into the church.

Mark Flory Steury of Mack Memorial church, Dayton, Ohio, asked his African-American members what attracted them. "It was not the sermon or preacher, but the caring people," he learned. The church's caring extends into the community in the form of daycare and homeless ministries.

Phill Carlos Archbold of the Brooklyn church in New York City commends Atlantic Northeast District for reaching out in love. "Our church serves as a launching pad for immigrants from around the world. During the holidays the district brings hundreds of boxes of food, medicine, clothing, blankets, and quilts. There's no other denomination which does that. Many of our members come, not to become Brethren, but because somebody cares. Then they stay. I tell my people that this is Brethren theology — that God is a God of love."

Make your building available.

"Bible study groups have met in people's homes, then asked to use our facility," says Gerald Rhoades of Harrisburg (Pa.) First church. "As we

Assignment: Race awareness

Recent Bethany Seminary graduate Greg Laszakovits begins a one-year assignment on race awareness in February through the General Board's Brethren Witness office.

Greg will work out of the General Offices in Elgin, Ill.,but hopes to spend a good deal of the year on the road, engaging Brethren in various settings with the challenge of giving racial issues a higher priority in denominational life.

Greg's work will include visiting racially diverse congregations; creating a resource base for individuals and congregations for use in classes and morning worship; assisting congregations in developing cross-racial relationships with neighboring congregations; leading retreats for youth or congregational groups; directing the Mendenhall, Miss., youth workcamp; and working with Brethren institutions in the area of race awareness.

do things together, we build trust relationships, sharing Brethren values and beliefs. Not every group joins our church, but some do.”

One such group that discovered a similar theology recently told Rhoades, “I guess we’ve been Brethren all along.”

Jeremy Peña

Youth from ACTS *Covenant Fellowship Lancaster, Pa., joined students from two African-American churches in their area on a mission trip to Kenya. The mission team of two Hispanics, four whites, and six African-Americans is shown here with friends from Kenya.*

Do not expect others to give up their heritage to adapt to Germanic traditions

The genius of the gospel is its trans-cultural nature. A good relationship among diverse members creates a new reality. First church, Chicago, recently combined traditional love feast with a community event on the Middle Passage, the waterway across the Atlantic Ocean traversed by slave ships for hundreds of years.

Do not expect ethnically different persons to continually play the heavy.

Let them feel at home without having to justify their opinions in terms of race or ethnicity. They need to voice their convictions but also want to blend. When appropriate, members may initiate conversations about race, but serving the cause of Christ should be the overriding concern.

Make your church a place where people can plug in and minister.

Wayne Sutton of Miami (Fla.) First church , stresses the importance of learning to know people well enough so their gifts become known to the community. People feel at home where their abilities are recognized and used.

Be understanding of cultural conflicts created by the church’s teachings.

“Cambodian members at Harrisburg First church subscribe to ‘both/and theology,’” relates Gerald Rhoades. “That is, they acknowledge the lordship of Christ while clinging to Buddhist traditions.” Because of Christianity’s exclusivity, many older Cambodians shy from the Christian faith, fearful of losing their heritage. Rhoades cites misunderstandings associated with ancestor worship. “Yet Americans erect grand tombstones and give memorials in honor of the dead. Is it really ancestor worship or simply a deep respect?”

Close to the heart of the Brethren lies the tradition of feetwashing. Some African-Americans express problems with the rite because of negative associations with servanthood within the context of slavery. Pastors suggest inviting all to the table, with special sensitivity for those who defer to a different expression of faith.

Phill Carlos Archbold teaches the theology of peacemaking in his Brooklyn congregation. Yet conflicts arise when his college-bound youth, caught between poverty and faithfulness, elect military service in order to benefit from military financial incentives. Archibold tells them, “Please talk this over with your God. I have no alternative for you. If you do go to war, remember who and Whose you are.”

Expose members to different cultural situations.

Orlando Redekopp, Chicago, envisions churches creating forums for multicultural experiences just as Brethren Volunteer Service provides a venue for young people to serve. The Salem congregation, near Dayton, Ohio, collaborates with an urban black church in a vineyard project to share preaching, music, and picnics several times a year.

ACTS Covenant youth in Lancaster, Pa. joined two black churches on a mission trip to Kenya. The African-American churches raised more money than was needed for the trip and subsidized the Brethren youth. Those same churches invited Brethren to participate in their community Bible school. Pastor Eikenberry relates, “At the closing exercise, the children came in together, arms around each other. They were friends.”

The Lake Charles congregation in Louisiana combined with a local black church to host a Kwanzaa event after Christmas. African-American members of the Brethren group served on the leadership team.

Learn to receive.

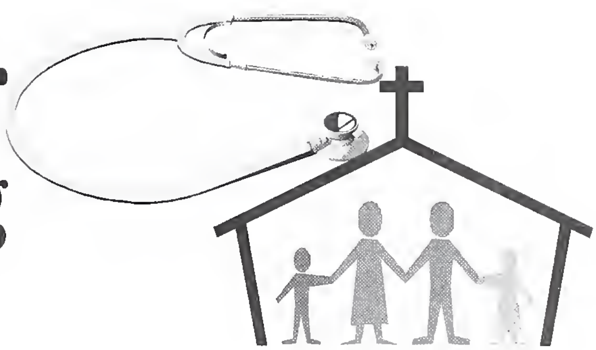
Brethren excel at giving but are not well-versed in receiving. Eikenberry tells of an African-American pastor in his community who said, “Everyone treats us like a mission field. No one wants to be partners.”

The indictment weighs heavily on the church. “We must learn from sister congregations to not have a ‘savior attitude.’ They have much to offer us.”

An interesting question surfaces at this point: If there are no ethnically different persons in a congregation, how critical is it to incorporate such change? The fact is that those who have few opportunities to experience diversity need these experiences more than those who live with them every day.

By exposing all of our members to a rich variety of worship practices, we will find God through different voices and enrich our faith journeys immensely. —Jeanne Jacoby Smith

On diversity, is your church still running like a Model A?



James Banks, nationally respected scholar, suggests four models for institutional reform. Applying his models to the life of the church, consider where your local congregation stands and how it plans to grow from Model A to Model D.

Model A: Mainstream

This model reflects mainstream, white, western culture, both in leadership and in worship styles. Ask the following questions about your congregation to see whether you fall into the Mainstream model.

Do you conduct worship, week after week, making few changes in format or style?

From the view in the pulpit, is your congregation pale in color or variegated with diversity?

If you incorporate an experience from another cultural background into worship, are your members accepting of it?

Does your congregation see most issues through western eyes? For example, is there concern about reaching ethnic peoples in your community? If so, is there a willingness to adapt?

Model B: Ethnic additive

This model involves the simple addition of ethnic events, holidays, and programs to church services and calendars, a helpful beginning for teaching awareness.

Does your church incorporate into its ministry the four F's: facts, foods, festivals, and famous people from various ethnic backgrounds?

Does your church celebrate Christmas, Easter, and other religious holy days by drawing on the wealth of customs and music from other heritages?

Does your church recognize Martin Luther King Day or Jewish holidays that provide a foundation for Christian values? What about Hispanic, Korean, or Nigerian traditions? These, too, are part of Brethren heritage.

Do your church school curricula reflect Brethren heroes, such as John T. Lewis, who represent ethnic groups other than the majority in your congregation?

Model C: Multi-ethnic

In this model, every event, concept, and issue is viewed from the perspective of minority and majority groups within our society and acted upon inclusively.

Does your church accept families of color and mixed racial backgrounds? Would those persons feel at home among you, enough to return again?

After working with multi-ethnic persons in your church, do you see and respect them as individuals and not as persons who are different?

If you represent an inner-city church and the neighborhood begins to change, do you automatically consider a move to the suburbs or do you stay, incorporating the community into the life of the church? What is your mission together and how can you best fulfill it?

Model D: Global

In Model D, church members view events, concepts, and issues from the perspectives of different peoples in our society and around the world. This model reflects a truly inclusive attitude.

Can your church handle controversial issues dealing with equality, both within this country and globally? For example, has it been open to the denomination's aid to North Korea?

Does your church regularly use music and worship forms that reflect a variety of world cultures, customs, and languages?

Do your church school classes talk about racial and ethnic issues with an eye toward understanding perspectives from global viewpoints?

Can your church step outside the confines of Christianity from time to time and, even if you do not subscribe to them, attempt to understand the perspectives of other religious groupings, such as Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists?

The local church will do well to adopt Model C. However, Banks' ideal model is Model D, which falls well within the realm of Brethren theology. The church at large has responded effectively to Model D. Examples are the many BVS projects in former Communist countries. Many local churches, however, continue to languish in Model A.

Model B represents a conscientious start for many congregations, especially for sensitizing members to new ways of seeing, thinking, and doing. Yet Models C and D represent the higher calling and will create for the 21st century a new brand of Brethren at the front door of the local church.

—Jeanne Jacoby Smith

Brethren colleges continue collaboration

BY NEVIN DULABAUM

The recruiting rules have changed.

This fact became strikingly evident in mid-November to top representatives of the five Church of the Brethren colleges, one university, one seminary, and the General Board during meetings at Bridgewater (Va.) College. The group of 35 was given the initial results from a survey conducted on their behalf in the fall with high school students, parents of prospective college students, and Brethren youth advisers.

It showed that 40 percent of the sophomores who last summer attended National Youth Conference couldn't name a Brethren college. Though that number improved to 20 percent for seniors, the survey also showed that Brethren high school students only look at two or three higher education choices, and often have made their choice by the start of their senior year. Coupled with the colleges' emphasis of recruiting high school seniors, these statistics help explain the low Brethren attendance at Brethren colleges, which in 1997-1998 was 531 out of 10,372 total students.

For many years, Brethren colleges treated each other as competitors. As a result, they had little official contact except for the yearly meeting of presidents and the General Board's top executive, a group known as the Committee on Higher Education (COHE).

By the mid-1990s, COHE members realized what this survey underscores—the real competition is not from each other but from every other college and university. They began encouraging select staff groupings from their institutions to meet in order to develop collaborative initiatives—pooling information and resources to provide curriculum and training for their collective student bodies, and joining Brethren-student recruitment efforts into one united effort.

Since then, the academic deans and admissions directors have started meeting, and work on a variety of joint projects has commenced.

Thus, the COHE meeting, held Nov. 19-21 at Bridgewater College, was historic in that it was the first-ever gathering of these four staff groupings—the presidents, academic deans, admissions directors, and development directors (who met together for the first time). Each group met separately for two sessions and together for two sessions. The COHE group also met individually with each group.

Nevin Dulabaum

Ron Wendeln of Prescience Associates, Cleveland, in November delivers his initial findings from a higher education survey taken this fall of five groups of Brethren to about 35 representatives of the Brethren colleges and seminary.

The admissions group gave a progress report on its relatively new venture called Church of the Brethren Collaboration on Admissions (CoBCoA). Over the past year, CoBCoA has waived application fees for Brethren students; produced a brochure; launched a Web site; compiled a database of prospective students; distributed T-shirts; promoted itself through ads and at National Youth Conference; and commissioned the survey.

Based on the survey, the group is expected to redirect its Brethren recruiting efforts to high school freshmen and sophomores, trying to gain a foothold with the students before they choose their college. Avenues being explored include a new publication, targeted mailings, and increased interaction at the regional youth conferences hosted by most of the colleges.

Why the emphasis on Brethren students at a time when their numbers are dwindling? The presidents in November addressed this, stating that Brethren students generally excel academically, are involved in myriad spiritual and social campus activities, and often take leadership positions within the church later in life. Each president also underscored the importance of their college's roots, stressing that their student bodies benefit from exposure to Brethren heritage and values.

In keeping with Brethren values, the colleges and the seminary identified conflict resolution and mediation skills as being something they could work on together, both in terms of handling campus conflicts and as a part of the academic program. To kick off this initiative, representatives from each institution will convene next summer at Bethany Seminary.

The colleges also acknowledge that each has its own curriculum with unique strengths. That's why they also are considering an inter-college student exchange program that would increase curriculum choices available to all Brethren college students.

As the colleges discern what it means to be Church of the Brethren institutions, the presidents said they would welcome reflection by the denomination on the value to the church of having five colleges and one university. Furthermore, they would like to see the links between their campuses and Brethren congregations strengthened so youth are routinely called by churches and asked to consider enrolling in Brethren colleges. *M.*

im Stuckey

hil Haynes, *Dewey Broyles, and Heather Harper in a fellowship knot"*

Young adults look inside themselves

BY WALT WILTSCHEK

Perhaps you're past the suggested age range of 18-35 for the denomination's annual Young Adult Conference. Perhaps you've thought about attending but didn't quite get there. Or maybe you're not quite old enough yet but hope to go someday. In any case, take a journey for a peek inside one of these conferences — a glimpse of the 1998 YAC.

Thursday, Nov. 26, 3:45 p.m. Some of sun pokes through an otherwise grayish Thanksgiving Day sky over the Camp Swatara parking lot in Bethel, Pa. Cars roll in slowly as those attending the conference arrive a few at a time and proceed to the registration area, sometimes stopping for some hellos or hugs along the way. The registration total of about 105 is lower than in some recent years, but an atmosphere of enthusiasm and vitality fills the main lodge nonetheless. Friendly greetings ring out as people sign up for workshops and housing or play games at a table near the wall, punctuated by far-flung friends' happy screams of recognition.

Thursday, 5:15 p.m. As tradition and Brethren friendliness dictate, a few icebreakers start off the slate of events, from lining up alphabetically by first name to forming groups by birthday months.

These icebreakers go beyond the normal name games and get-acquainted activities, however, as the groups brainstorm the biggest social issues they feel aren't being addressed by the church.

Runners check from group to group to be sure each group comes up with a unique issue, and then spokespeople compile a list.

The items cover some deep ground, including poverty, diversity, apathy, health care, domestic violence, AIDS, declining membership, genetic manipulation, sexual addiction, gay and lesbian issues, sexism, and balancing the church's internal and external ministries.

Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Following a traditional Thanksgiving feast with vegetarian options and the opening announcements and introductions, keynote speaker Glenn Mitchell, pastor of the State College, Pa., congregation, takes the podium for the first time to address the conference theme, "Looking In, Reaching Out."

Mitchell focuses the opening session on the idea of "groping" for God taken from Acts 17: "a sense of hunger and desire for the journey, yet it's not all mapped out, it's not finished," Mitchell says. "We try to satisfy the desire for God with a lot of different things."

Following video imagery and some devotional readings of works by Thomas Merton and others, Mitchell invites the young adults to form groups and discuss things that enable them to be more attentive to God. Answers such as music, journaling, silence, having creative time, and sharing stories come. Conferencegoer Carissa Fralin recalls a quote she has heard: "You can only see the road as far as the headlights, but that's enough to make the journey."

Thursday, 10 p.m. A moving Taizé-style worship experience has just concluded, as young adults sat with small candles in a large circle around a centerpiece of two dozen other flickering flames. The service has been a quiet yet powerful one, with piano, violin, flute, and singing—weaving beautiful, simple tunes around readings and open sharing.

The group exits the service in silence, but soon singing fills the building again as some follow the snack with an informal hymn sing.

Friday, Nov. 27, 9:15 a.m. Mitchell is at the front of the lodge again, talking about discernment in his second session to an attentive, if slightly tired, audience. He urges the young adults to "let God lead rather than fit ourselves into a decision." A slide presentation on light and the obstacles that block us from it is followed by more sharing in groups and a presentation of some aids to discernment of God's voice, such as scripture, finding a place where we can more clearly listen to God, and helping each other in the community to see more clearly.

"The decision often emerges in a way that surprises me," Mitchell says.

Friday, 1:30 p.m. Following lunch, conferencegoers are sitting in the second period of workshops for the day, choosing from among 10 choices.

Topics ranged from Jim Myer's "How Does the Bible Affect Your Life?," to clowning with Kimber Mitchell, to gender issues with Chris and Scott Douglas, to information on BVS.

Once workshops are finished, everyone heads out to a selection of free time activities such as football, hiking to Swatara's landmark "rockpile," ultimate frisbee, choir practice, or just relaxing.

Friday, 8 p.m. After dinner, the group sits in worship once more, this time following a drama presentation and singing with a service of feetwashing. The young adults form their circles by untangling a "fellowship knot," then proceed in the tradition of the basin and the towel, with music throughout.

Communion follows, and then a time of candle lighting, which concludes with all the smaller circles forming one large circle and bursting nto joyous song.

That joyous spirit continues through the evening, with more than a dozen acts in the annual talent show and continuing celebration through music, a campfire, and conversation until late in the night.

Saturday, Nov. 28, 9:30 a.m. Those who made it for a sleepy continental breakfast are joined by others in the main hall again for a final session. Lighting a "dancing flame" lamp as he has each session, Mitchell focuses this time on "praising through action," looking at the ways we live out our faith. He shares more examples from literature and his personal experience in the Vietnam draft era, underscoring that actions need to spring from a "spirit of willingness," not willfulness.

Mitchell concludes by using the Jewel song "Hands" to sum up his message, saying, "There is a powerful sense of our hands being small, yet they're our hands, and we take our hands into prayer and into service."

Saturday, 11:30 a.m. The time of closing worship has arrived, with more singing, storytelling, and a presentation of the song "Unity" by the conference choir, directed by YAC songleader Jim Bowyer of Princeton, N.J. It is another moving song in a weekend of strong music.

The service concludes with a water blessing to the strains of "O Healing River," as a "sign of commitment to use our hands to follow the call of God in our lives."

Event coordinator Jenny Stover, a BVSer in Elgin, Ill., thanks everyone who has made the weekend possible and urges everyone to return for the next YAC May 29-31, 1999, at Camp Woodland Altars as the conference leaves its traditional Thanksgiving weekend date in hopes of reaching out to more young adults.

Then, after a time of evaluation and a final meal together, the group packs up and departs until the parking lot stands empty under scattered sunshine once more.

Walt Wiltschek is associate pastor of the Westminster (Md.) Church of the Brethren, and

Brethrening

Getting home for Christmas

The angels were perfect. I mean, they had perfectly white sculptured wings, set straight on little pink shoulders, with yards and yards of white netting floating behind each satin-slippered foot. Mary and Joseph were solemn. Even the live baby Jesus didn't make a peep. The stained glass windows of the cavernous sanctuary lent perfectly colored hues to the scene. Pomp, ceremony, drama, and. . . ugh! This MGM production was leaving me cold! What was wrong with me that I wasn't touched by the sweetest story of the Bible as it majestically unfolded before me?

After the pageantry came punch and cookies down in the recreation hall. My small son stood by my side amid hundreds of chattering former angels, parents, and church leaders. He attended preschool at this lovely church, and so I thought we would make the first move to becoming involved in the church life itself. I had not attended church for years since marriage, and thought it was time to return to the fold for my children's sake. So we ventured forth and joined the Christmas celebration. But my son and I might as well have been alone on an island for all the attention turned our way!

Not one person had noticed how awkward I felt under my frozen smile, standing next to people but not being brave enough to extend my hand and introduce myself. I remember downing a cookie and balancing some punch for an eternity, then grabbing my little boy's hand and making a disappointed retreat.

Another Christmas celebration was in a simple sanctuary, beautifully decorated in natural holly and candles. Was it ever different! Runners of brown paper had been placed on the carpet around the perimeter of the sanctuary to protect the carpet from candle wax. This was a great idea, until we all walked on it. The crinkle and popping of high heels and shoes was a cacophony which made me giggle. During the beautiful candle lighting ceremony, as we all stood quietly singing on the crunchy paper, a toddler decided to sing along with the gusto and strange key tone only a toddler can produce. And then a lovely foreign-born gentleman decided to take many many photos—flash, of course. It was unrehearsed spontaneous gaiety. I loved every unexpected and imperfect moment. It had to have made the Lord smile.

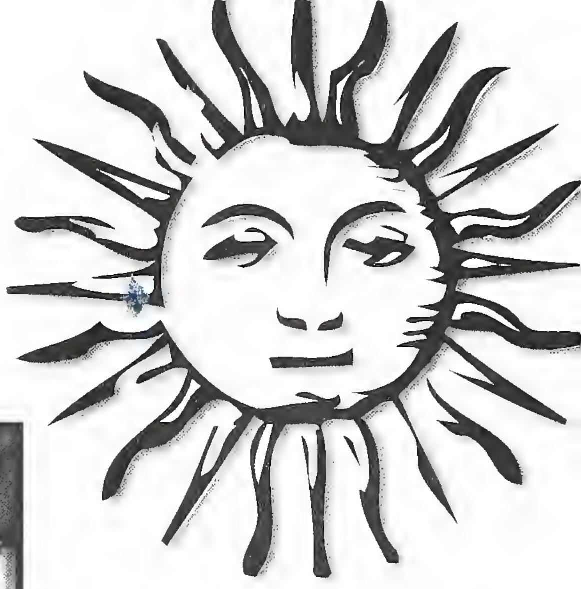
But my lasting memory of that Christmas was the scene of the soft candlelight illuminating a group of people who had enveloped me with love and welcome the moment I stepped through the church doors months before. A group of people I had grown fond of so quickly. I had been invited to work and play with them, and to worship God in their unassuming and comfortable midst. Christmas will always be a special time for all Christians. Mine has been much more special because of the Brethren welcome I received so many years ago.

—Robyn Reals, *Arlington (Va.) Church of the Brethren*

Messenger would like to publish other short, colorful, humorous or poignant stories of real-life incidents involving Brethren. Please send your submission to Messenger, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120-1694 or e-mail to the editor at ffarrar_gb@brethren.org.

Minister for a summer

Ministry Summer Service changes lives of young interns, and the congregations that host them



Service is ministry *for these Ministry Summer Service participants working during their orientation to rehab a building for the Concord Community Center Development in Indianapolis, Ind.*

BY WALT WILTSCHEK

Several months remain until the Church of the Brethren's Ministry Summer Service program begins its fourth year of placing young adults in local ministry settings. But Allen Hansell, director of ministry for the General Board, is already eager for it to arrive.

"I jumped at the opportunity to get involved, because I think it's a fantastic opportunity to take young adults and give them some practical experience at the congregational level," said Hansell, who joined the MSS training for the first time last summer.

"Each year some young adults who were undecided come away from the experience affirming ministry, and that's exciting. It's one of the highlights of my year."

Indeed, the program is causing excitement in various corners of the denomination, from the MSS participants themselves to the congregations that host them and points in between. Thirty young adults have gone through MSS in its first three summers, and organizers have high hopes that those numbers will continue to grow.

Ministry Summer Service operates by linking college students and others ages 18-24 with congregations, camps, and other church programs for 10 weeks of service in an internship style. Participants go through an orientation together before heading to their summer placement, where they receive a mentor who guides them through the remainder of the experience.

It's been everything that Chris Douglas, the denomination's coordinator of youth/young adult ministry, hoped for when ideas for a program like this first sprang up.

Douglas saw the number of people applying to be National Youth Conference coordinators and workcamp coordinators and realized there were far more qualified applicants than there were positions. That started the thought processes rolling.

"I thought, 'Here are people who want to volunteer their time to work for the church, and there aren't enough spaces right now, so somehow we have to enlarge that number,'" Douglas said. "Brethren Volunteer Service was doing a good job of year-long positions, but did not offer short-term options."

Soon she and some others in Brethren leadership began talking, and about the same time a major ministry paper came through Annual Conference. As the thoughts and ideas intersected, MSS was born — originally as a partnership between the youth/young adult office and BVS. The ministry office replaced BVS as the focus became clearly ministry/internship-oriented.

Douglas tapped Judy Mills Reimer to run the initial orientation and provide coordination, and seven young adults formed the charter group in 1996. They quickly discovered that the initial group and those that followed were made up of very varied interests.

"Some come having a pretty clear call, some aren't sure, and some say hey have no interest in preaching ut somehow want to be connected o the church," Douglas said. "So we ust take people where they are. It an include camp placements, cross-ultural, or inner city. We really try o tailor it to particular passions or nterests so that young adults have a hance to try that out."

Some of that discerning comes hrough the orientation period. Par-icipants get acquainted, spend time n worship and learning and service, isit Bethany Theological Seminary nd meet with staff there, explore the Scriptures, Brethren heritage, and he idea of "calling," and have time or recreation, too.

Mentors also receive training luring the orientation and have a hance to meet with the young adults hey'll be guiding over the weeks head. Combined, Hansell called the prientation a key component of the experience in its preparation and eam-building.

Then comes the day for MSSers to nead out all across the country and pegin the work they wished to explore. While it's not always easy peing far from home or trying com-pletely new tasks, most seem to eturn from their stay citing positive experiences.

Keith Carter of Decatur, Ind., pent last summer working at the Briery Branch Church of the Brethren in Shenandoah District hrough MSS. He knew he wanted to become involved in some type of church work, and his pastor in Indi-ana, Terry Shumaker, suggested that Carter look into MSS. That was just he beginning.

"I thought, 'What did I get myself nto?'" Carter said, recalling his ori-entation time. "I was nervous, scared, and excited, and just ready to get going."

His first day included a hospital visit where he passed out. "I was off o a good start!" Carter joked. Things definitely improved there-after, though, as Carter learned his strengths and weaknesses in min-istry, worked with worship and preaching and youth, and learned from his mentor, pastor Randy Cosner. Following the summer, Carter decided to become a candidate for licensing to the ministry and transferred to Bridgewater College.

"If anyone is interested at all in MSS, they have to go in with an open mind, a willingness to learn and be mentored, and a desire to do God's work," Carter said. "It helped me prepare for my future."

Another 1998 MSSer, Rebekkah Helsel of Altoona, Pa., wrote in the newsletter at Oakton (Va.) Church of the Brethren, where she served: "God has such an amazing plan for each one of us, and it's a constant adventure to discover it if we only allow ourselves the freedom to explore, and the confidence to step out onto new paths."

Helsel also came out of the summer affirming ministry and seeking to be licensed, far from where she started when she entered the program. That came in large part due to the strong relationship she built with her mentor, Oakton pastor Kurt Borgmann — the other critical piece of the MSS equation.

Congregations apply to be placement sites just as the young adults apply to be summer interns. Borgmann had done some mentoring work before in other settings and urged his congregation to pursue this option.

"We've heard all these things about calling people to ministry, and this congregation wasn't doing it because we have no one here right now in that category," Borgmann said. "But there are other ways churches can support calling people to ministry, so it was in that spirit I proposed it to the board. It's one of the gifts we can give to the church."

The board agreed with Borgmann, and eventually Helsel came to them for the summer. Borgmann worked to give her a wide variety of experiences but found he learned from it, too.

"When you're with someone and saying, 'Here's what I do and why I do it this way,' it brings a new kind of focus to your own ministry," Borgmann said. "There's a new kind of awareness. It's sometimes exhausting but very rewarding."

The host site provides a BVS-like $45-per-month stipend, room and board, transportation, and a support structure. The interns also receive a scholarship at the end of the summer, provided by a privately funded source since MSS currently has no line item in the General Board budget — a source of concern for future growth, according to Hansell.

Douglas said she encourages more congregations to become "teaching" sites for young adults like these, as well as to identify young adults in their midst who might be good candidates for MSS. Intern applications for the 1999 edition are due Feb. 25, with orientation set for June 4-11 at Bethany Seminary in Indiana.

She and Hansell both expressed some disappointment that the enrollment in MSS slipped from 12 in 1997 to 11 last summer, but attributed it to National Youth Conference being held in July. With no NYC the next few years, they expect the numbers to rise again.

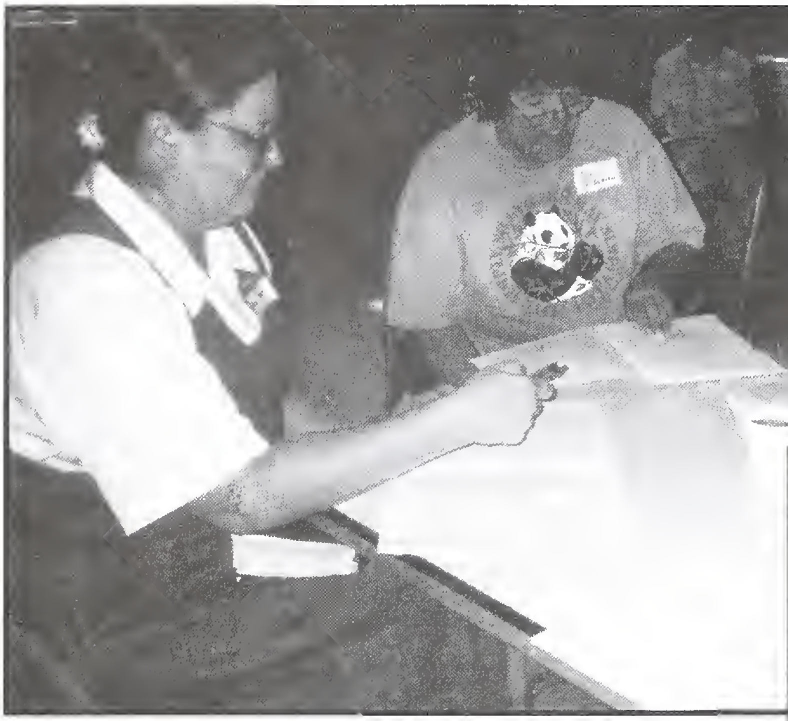
"I think my dream is that a lot more young adults would feel their gifts for ministry being called out through MSS and affirmed, and that they would find a kind of confirmation of their call," Douglas said. "We have some wonderful congregations who've done such a wonderful job in mentoring, especially pastors."

Hansell emphasized, too, that participants don't have to be geared toward pastoral ministry or have definite goals — just a willingness to explore. As long as that happens, his excitement will continue bubbling. His experience with last summer's MSS group has convinced him.

"They went into the summer with a lot of anxiety . . . and came away excited about the summer, and what happened to them, and with a deep commitment to the church," Hansell said. "And the congregations were just glowing with what happened in the summer months.

"They'll remember this forever." *M.*

Walt Wiltschek is associate pastor at the Westminister (Md.) Church of the Brethren, working with youth and Christian education.


Charles Hite

Oak Grove *Church of the Brethren members Emma Jean Woodard, Bea Edwards, and Jane Fralin Grisso discussing congregational ethics.*

Charles Hite

Janet Gibson *and Pastor Roy Heinlin from Troutville Church of the Brethren.*

Ethics for a better life together

With help from Congregational Life Teams, many churches participate in workshops

BY CHARLES HITE

A series of workshops pertaining to congregational ethics was held in Virlina District as a joint effort between the Virlina District Ministry Commission and the Congregational Life Team coordinator. The author of this article, Charles Hite, was one of the workshop leaders.

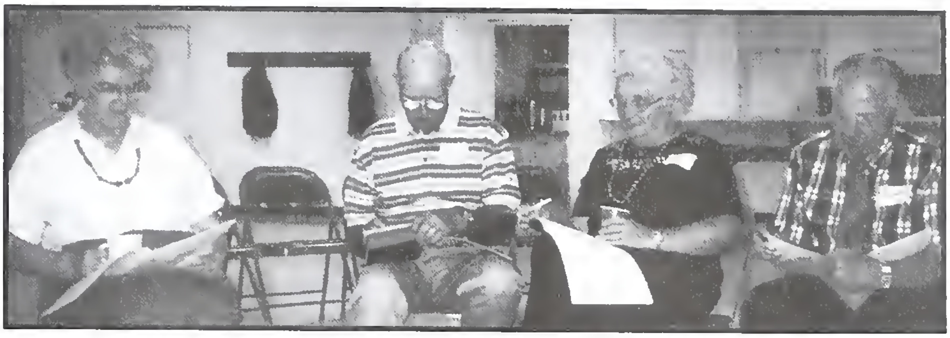
We are not the ethics police," Julie Hostetter told a gathering of church leaders in Eden, N.C. "We're here to present a resource that can enhance congregational life."

That message was central to the presentation that Hostetter, coordinator of Area 3 Congregational Life Team, I, and three other colleagues made last fall to six Virlina District workshops that dealt with the 1996 "Ethics for Congregations" Annual Conference paper.

It's difficult not to seem like the police when you come bearing a booklet that contains a 29-point ethics inventory, 20 "ethical guidelines," and other imperative language that could easily conjure up images of Big Brother. Our ad hoc committee sought to assure workshop participants that the "Ethics for Congregations" paper was not a legalistic doctrine that sought to dictate specific do's and don'ts for churches. Rather, we saw the paper as an attempt by the collective church to capture the essence of denominational statements and teachings on the important ethical principles and values of the Church of the Brethren.

Role-playing helped us get our message across. The five of us began each workshop as if we were a local church committee that had been given the task of explaining the paper to the congregation. Each of us had been assigned a section of the paper to report back to the committee. Presenting the paper this way helped avoid focusing only on the guidelines and inventory. It allowed us — in our fictional roles as local church leaders — to express concerns about the paper or to suggest ways our congregation might be "in step" or "out of step" with various principles, values, and guidelines.

It was hard to find any disagreement with any of the broad and more widely known principles — the New Testament is our rule of faith and practice; the Brethren word is good as our bond; all members are ministers; and Brethren shall be known by their fruits.


Julie Hostetter

Eden (NC) Church of the Brethren *members working on the ethics paper are Shirleen Pratt, Randy Hylton, and Ray Warner.*

But when it comes to applying these principles through more particular guidelines, things get stickier. Greg Broyles, a hospital pharmacist who is also a licensed Church of the Brethren minister, always got a lot of smiles and knowing nods from workshop participants at the same point in the presentation. When discussing the section of the paper dealing with the local congregation's relation to its community, Broyles said it probably wasn't right for him to photocopy Sunday school curriculum or church hymns. "I just never thought about how that really is taking away someone's livelihood. It's stealing."

I seemed to strike a responsive chord when, in discussing how the congregation relates to its members, I said churches need to move away from elections as their method of selecting leaders. "Election ballots mean there are winners and losers," I added. "Our church shouldn't endorse a process that creates losers."

Emma Jean Woodard, representing Virlina District ministers on our team, voiced a pet peeve when it was her turn to review the section about congregations relating to their members. When church members go out of their way to bring new people into leadership, she said, "Don't undermine them by pointing out, 'We've never done it that way!'"

David Shumate, Virlina district executive, in reviewing the section on a congregation's relationship to its pastor and staff, had some practical advice. Make sure you have a contract with the pastor and be specific about the terms of employment. That way there won't be surprises.

After our role-play, workshop participants gathered in small groups to discuss the paper and to review the guidelines and ethics inventory. In reporting back to the larger group, there were a few issues that seemed to always arise:

- Providing a support group to the pastor and pastoral family. Many participants acknowledge they didn't do this or that they didn't provide it with the right group. The board executive committee is not the type of group that can do this job, Shumate said.

At CLT workshop, evangelism is not what it used to be

When polled earlier this year, pastors of the Church of the Brethren's Pacific Southwest District indicated that their top concerns pertain to evangelism-related issues.

These concerns led to "Continuing the work of Jesus ... into the 21st Century," three days of special events held Oct. 30 - Nov. 1 at Pomona (Calif.) Fellowship Church of the Brethren. Sponsored by the district and the General Board's Area 5 Congregational Life Team, the event featured an address by Eddie Gibbs, professor of evangelism at Fuller Theological Seminary's School of World Mission.

Some thoughts from Gibbs:

- Evangelism, on the brink of a new century, is a tremendous challenge. It's a very different challenge than evangelism was 10 years ago.
- The church is not in the center of society anymore. The world today is filled with competing interest groups. You can't just invite people to church through door knockers. It's person-to-person sharing. Repeating past forms of evangelism is much less effective today because people don't have a past knowledge or memory of faith to return to."
- The day of the local church is over. The day of the mission outpost has come. Our focus needs to be out there in the community and not upon ourselves.
- Evangelism is a process of developing and learning about the community surrounding the church. As the congregation goes into the world, it will experience Christ in ways it will never experience if it stays stay in the sanctuary. Because of the non-church culture, 80 percent of evangelism needs to be done outside the church grounds.

Gibbs connected with the participants' understanding of evangelism, leaving some asking when they could hear him again, according to Jeff Glass, coordinator of the Area 5 Congregational Life Team.

- Operating with strong consensus and harmony in making decisions. Congregations shouldn't operate on a "majority rules" basis, participants agreed. If a decision is split on a close vote, then it should not be implemented. Better to engage in further discussion and try to build a stronger base of support.
- Avoiding anonymous calls and letters or communications outside established forums. "You'd be surprised how many anonymous calls I get," said one pastor. "But I'm not going to act on anonymous information." Another form of this, said another pastor, is the old, "Everybody's saying. . .."

Despite the disagreements that many of the guidelines provoked, Hostetter reminded workshop participants that Brethren have a strong tradition of not withdrawing when conflicts arise. "We remain engaged. We remain in dialog," she said. Altogether about 120 people representing 37 congregations participated in the workshops.

Charles Hite is director of bioethics for Carilion Health System in Roanoke, Va. Prior to entering the field of ethics, he was a healthcare journalist. He has a master's degree in clinical ethics from the University of Virginia and is a member of Central Church of the Brethren in Roanoke.

With CLT help, a congregation seeks vision

The Walnut Grove Church of the Brethren, Johnstown, Pa., has been consulting with the Congregational Life Team, Area 1, for revitalization of their congregation. The transformation process designed by Jan Kensinger, CLT coordinator of Hummelstown Pa., included several steps.

The first step was to organize a "Vision Team" representing the diversity of the congregation's membership, and this was done with the assistance of the pastor, Michael Clark. Kensinger had several meetings with the Vision Team, and prepared a bibliography of printed resources for the members on the topics of leadership, spiritual direction, and transitional movement in congregations.

Assisting Kensinger with the consultation was Linda McCauliff, of Johnstown, Pa., a Congregational Life Team staff member. Additional steps in the process included presenting information concerning the life cycles of congregations, preparing a timeline of the history of the congregation, developing a congregational survey to gather information and perspectives about the ministries of the church and community, and compiling and printing the survey results.

On Sunday, Nov. 8, the Congregational Life Team members joined the Walnut Grove congregation for worship and a carry-in meal. One important quality that the congregation identified in its survey was that they love to eat! After lunch, they were organized into small groups to draft ideas for formulating a mission statement.

This process invites pastoral, congregational, and community input into adopting a "vision" that enables a congregation to move into a new and exciting extension of ministry within the community. Pastor Michael Clark commented, "This process is extremely helpful and important to our church as we define where we are headed. It energized the Vision Team, and was well received by the congregation."

The youth training event *was led by David Witkowsky, left, and David Steele.*

Jan Kensinger

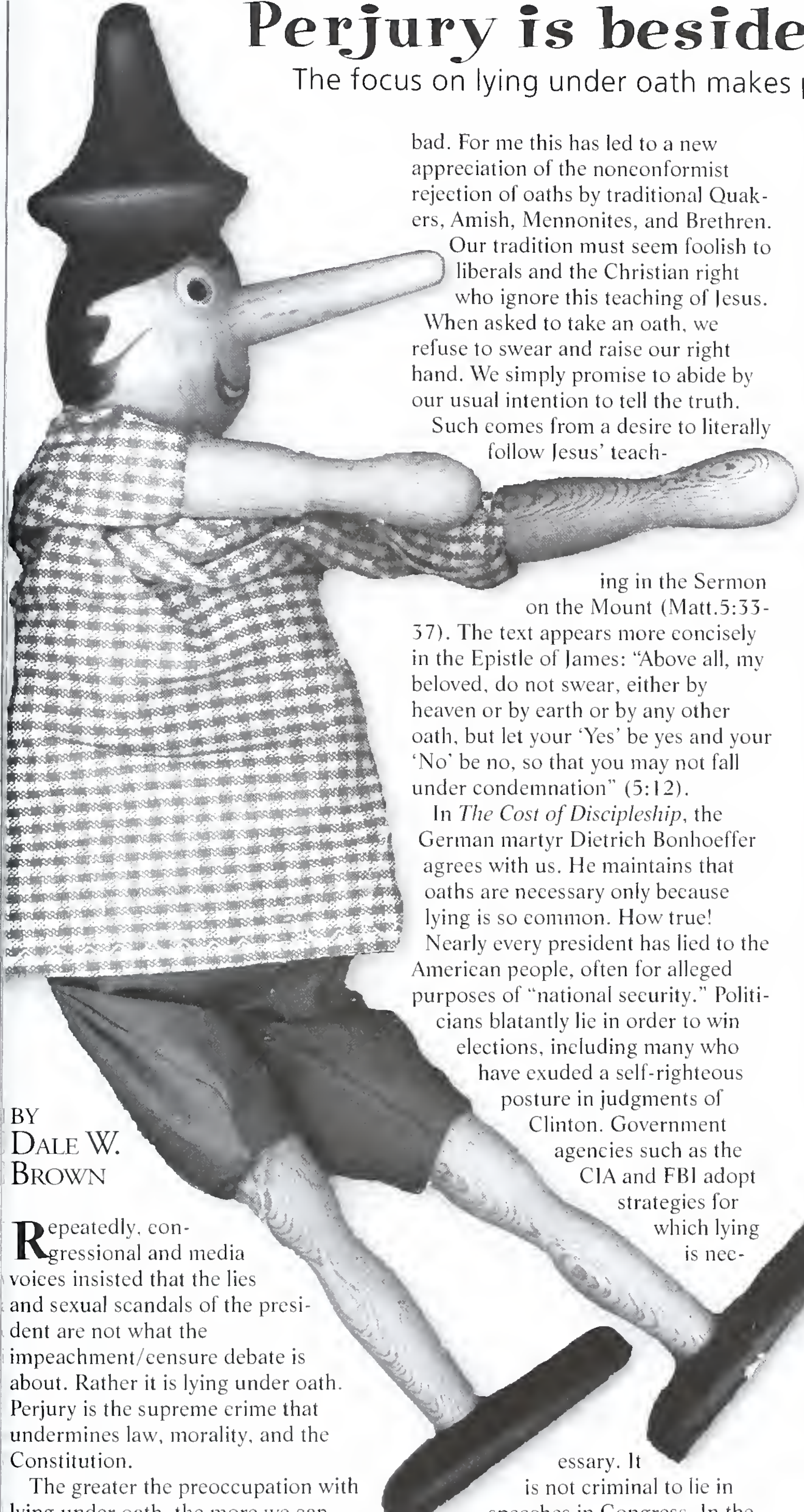
The youth *of Walnut Grove Church of the Brethren..*

The Congregational Life Team, Area 1, also sponsored a one-day training event for pastors and youth leaders on Family-based Youth Ministry. The event was Nov. 7 at the Martinsburg (Pa.) Memorial Church of the Brethren. Pastors David Witkovsky, of the Roaring Spring congregation, and David Steele, of the Martinsburg congregation, led the 30 participans representing 18 congregations and 4 districts through a new model of implementing youth ministry that emphasizes a wholistic rather that a programmatic approach for ministering to youth in the church.

With previous formal training in this model, both leaders have begun putting a distinctive "Brethren spin" on an exciting ecumenical approach.

Perjury is beside the point

The focus on lying under oath makes plain lying seem okay



BY
DALE W. BROWN

Repeatedly, congressional and media voices insisted that the lies and sexual scandals of the president are not what the impeachment/censure debate is about. Rather it is lying under oath. Perjury is the supreme crime that undermines law, morality, and the Constitution.

The greater the preoccupation with lying under oath, the more we can conclude that lying in general is not so bad. For me this has led to a new appreciation of the nonconformist rejection of oaths by traditional Quakers, Amish, Mennonites, and Brethren. Our tradition must seem foolish to liberals and the Christian right who ignore this teaching of Jesus. When asked to take an oath, we refuse to swear and raise our right hand. We simply promise to abide by our usual intention to tell the truth.

Such comes from a desire to literally follow Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt.5:33-37). The text appears more concisely in the Epistle of James: "Above all, my beloved, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your 'Yes' be yes and your 'No' be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation" (5:12).

In *The Cost of Discipleship*, the German martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer agrees with us. He maintains that oaths are necessary only because lying is so common. How true! Nearly every president has lied to the American people, often for alleged purposes of "national security." Politicians blatantly lie in order to win elections, including many who have exuded a self-righteous posture in judgments of Clinton. Government agencies such as the CIA and FBI adopt strategies for which lying is necessary. It is not criminal to lie in speeches in Congress. In the impeachment proceedings it was frequently assumed that it was not lying but lying under oath that was criminal.

In interpreting why Jesus taught against oath taking, Bonhoeffer makes a fascinating observation. He reasons: "Where the oath claims final truth, space is given to the lie." His insight corroborates the common acceptance of lying. He adds that a "singular focus on the oath can be a protection for a lie."

In recent impeachment proceedings it seems that lies were protected by featuring lies under oath. The public sensed that preoccupation with perjury was used to cover the lie that "this is not about sex." Sanctimonious statements about perjury could deflect the lie that presumed sadness in the duty to impeach, especially when uttered by those who had sought for years to get the president. Likewise, accusations of perjury diverted attention from the lie that named Kenneth Starr an "independent" counsel.

But Bonhoeffer's interpretations cannot be appropriated to overlook Clinton's sin. In his concluding interpretation of Jesus' teaching about oaths, Bonhoeffer stated that lying results from the refusal to bare one's sinfulness before God and others. A few years later in one of his prison letters (December 1943), Bonhoeffer pointed to the dangers of any coercive truthfulness that violates personal secrecy. He surmises that "talking openly about sin" can be a symptom of sin. He grew to appreciate Adalbert Stifter, one of his favorite authors, who articulated a "refusal to force his way into man's inner life."

Another deviation from absolute truthfulness was expressed by Donald McDullough in a recent *Christian Century* article. He argued that a white lie may have more integrity at times than the truth. For example, he politely accepted a dinner invitation he did not savor because he knew his spouse would like it.

Another chapter in Bonhoeffer's life occurred while he was involved in the conspiracy against Hitler. In *Ethics*, he opted for relational truth over factual truth. He defended the answer of a child to a teacher who asked whether it was true that his father often came home drunk. The child had to decide whether to follow the rule of school or the rule of family. The child denied that his father often came home drunk. His answer was untrue, but Bonhoeffer claims that "it nevertheless gave expression to the truth that the family is an institution *sui generis* and that the teacher had no right to interfere with it."

We may not agree entirely with Bonhoeffer, but we may affirm giving priority to relationships in some contexts. Most of us can sanction lying through examples such as protecting a slave hidden in the underground railroad or a Jewish person seeking refuge from the Nazis.

The same traditions that might sanction lies in extraordinary circumstances nevertheless treasure integrity in daily lives. Quaker merchants weaned our Anglo-Saxon culture from the barter system. In that system the merchant needed to lie in setting his price. The buyer was compelled to lie in making a counter offer. An agreed-on price resulted from a ritual of lying. Quakers were the first to set a fixed price that they judged to be fair. A remnant of the barter system often remains when we purchase an auto or a home. We either enjoy or resent having to endure this process. Our salvation is with *Consumer Reports*, whose staff endeavors to give us a truthful price, for a price.

The obsession of making absolute the sin of perjury may result from the abundance of lawyers in Congress and the drove of legal experts who monopolize media circuits. For most of us, truthfulness is more important when we relate to our families, associates at work, and people with whom we deal in serving our needs.

Traditionally, Brethren enjoyed the reputation of being folk for whom their word was as good as their bond. Their integrity was not held hostage to the degree of honesty of a president. Andy Murray, a Brethren folk singer who is professor of peace studies at Juniata College, composed a song about Cyrus Bomberger. In verses he sings how Cyrus, who could be trusted to give two full measures in a two-bushel bag, would be trusted to walk right in the pearly gates. Gabriel would report to St. Peter:

"If he says his name is down in the book, it's there without a doubt."

The chorus summarizes:

"He's a full measure man,
He won't tell you a lie.
When Cyrus rolls his wagon to the scales,
Just wave him right on by.
Level on the level, signed with the shake of a hand.
Unaffected, well-connected
Simple, honest man."

Traditions stressing the nonviolent nature of Jesus are the same ones that have embodied teachings against the oath. Again, the relationship is substantiated in Bonhoeffer's interpretations of the Sermon on the Mount. He advocates that disciples be extremely cautious about any pledge of an oath of allegiance.

Since Christians are bound to the will of God alone, no earthly obligations can be absolutely binding. The future must be free from absolute allegiances other than our promised allegiance to Jesus as Lord in discerning the will of God. Similarly, whenever peace traditions have discerned the Way of Christ to be incompatible with the demands of the state, they have espoused a higher allegiance to the will of God incarnate in the Jesus way.

What are the implications of nonconformist attitudes about oaths to the president's impeachment? If lying is common in high places and our culture, there may be credence in those who proclaim another admonition of Jesus: "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone"(John 8:7). Most commentators agree that Clinton sinned. In the same passage, Jesus admonished the sinner to sin no more. Since it is sinful to lie, it is sinful to lie under oath.

Yet when the sin of perjury is permeated with an absolutist ethos, temptations emerge that subvert possibilities of forgiveness and a chance for a new beginning. Whenever one person becomes the scapegoat, it is easy for the rest of us to ignore or rationalize our sins. We need to foster faith responses that encourage the integrity of everyone. And in the present context of judgment and hatred, we need to revive New Testament themes of forgiveness and redemptive love.

Dale W. Brown, professor emeritus, Bethany Theological Seminary, presently relates to the Young Center for the Study of Anabaptist and Pietist Groups and the satellite of Bethany Theological Seminary on the campus of Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, Pa.

Brethrening

Anatomy lessons

One day, my nephew was accompanying my mother to the doctor's office. He noticed a picture on the office wall and wanted to know what it was. After my mother explained to him that it was a picture of the human heart, Paul pondered for a moment, and then asked very seriously, "But where's God?"

Another day, my then six-year-old daughter, Esther, was admiring her hands. She was grasping one finger with her other hand, and said, "There's bones in there."

I responded, "Yes, that's right."

She continued, "God did a good job making us." (Silence.) "He stayed in the lines." —Sue Wagner Fields

Sue Wagner Fields, of Bernville, Pa., is an ordained minister of the Church of the Brethren working in areas of justice, peace, simple living, and family.

Messenger *would like to publish other short, colorful, humorous or poignant stories of real-life incidents involving Brethren. Please send your submission to* Messenger, *1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120-1694 or e-mail to the editor at ffarrar_gb@brethren.org.*

When words are an improvement over the wonderful silence, you'd better say them. Otherwise, you'd better not.

uaker silence

appreciated your editorial comients about silence in the November ssue. In October, I attended a writig colloquium at the Earlham chool of Religion in Richmond, nd. A student there, Elizabeth yzenga, shared the best explanation 've heard for the silence of Friends Ieeting. She sent me a copy, so I hought I'd pass her words along.

Ron Martin-Adkins
Washington, D.C.

The following is used with permision of the author, Elizabeth Lyzenga, rom Ann Arbor, Mich., who is in her hird year as a student at Earlham chool of Religion.

One thing Quakers are best known r is the silence at the center of our vorship. Quakers keep silence for at east two reasons—out of a holy kepticism, and a holy awe, of the ower of words. Quakers, rooted in he silence between words, know nost words are unnecessary! Worhip is a time away from words, to eek what is beneath words, beyond vords—more real than words. To peak out of the silence, then, is an wesome responsibility; to write out f that silence is, too. Marianne Ioore said of poetry, "Anything is llowable, so long as it improves on he blank page." When words are an nprovement over the wonderful ilence, you'd better say them. Othrwise, you'd better not.

Friends who have sat in silence ogether have seen one another, and hemselves, scandalously without heir words on. We don't need words o fill up the space between us, or to nake sure that God is there. But, we ind that into that space, and before ur God, words come.

Many Quakers know the story of ohn Woolman's trip into the back ountry to visit some native Amerians with whom he did not share a anguage. During his visit, they took time to pray together, and Woolman asked the translators not to bother translating. Though they could not speak to one another, there was a sense of divine love among all the people gathered, according to Woolman, and he heard later from one translator the comment from one man there: "I love to feel where words come from."

As we gather from our different places for this weekend, let us ground ourselves first in the silence together. Before we begin to share our love of words, let us share God in a deeper place—the place from where words come.

—Elizabeth Lyzenga

A Quiet Place in Indiana

Yesterday I sat down in my home for lunch and I grabbed two pieces of mail to read while I ate: *Abbey Letter* (from St. Gregory's Abbey, Three Rivers, Mich.) and MESSENGER. I do not think it was coincidence that it was those two pieces, as the editorial on the last page of MESSENGER was regarding the Abbey.

For many years I too made frequent retreats both at St. Gregory's and also around the corner at The Hermitage, which is a Mennonite retreat center. It was there that I felt a strong call from God to begin my training in retreat work and also spiritual direction.

I have completed the two-year program in spiritual guidance and also the one-year program in Christian Contemplative Prayer Groups through the Shalem Institute in Maryland. During that time I finished my work with TRIM and was ordained in the Church of the Brethren in February 1995.

In March of that year, a group of us here in Northern Indiana saw a dream fulfilled when we opened A Quiet Place Prayer Center. It is on the grounds of Camp Alexander Mack in Milford, Ind. It is a small three-bedroom retreat house for which I am director—cooking, cleaning, meeting with persons in spiritual direction, leading retreats, etc.

The Center can just barely keep me in a part-time position financially and because of that I have been working half-time at Camp Mack. Since I have also gone back to college I am cutting back on my hours there so that I can devote more time to "marketing" our Prayer Center.

I really believe that what we need in our world today is fewer words and more time and place to listen for the voice of the Holy. I sense your affirmation of that! However, I think most people do not realize that is what they need. Your article touched a place deep within me.

You can find us on the internet at campmack@npcc.net and then click on Quiet Place. I also have a home address: milfam@npcc.net.

Norma Miller
Milford, Ind.

December made me think

I want to thank you for some excellent articles in the December issue of MESSENGER, particularly Paula Bowser's sermon on Amos with this sentence: "Amos has the gall to point out that the whole time we're sinning away we're knee-deep in church." It almost surprises me that she is able to keep a pastorate, if she makes statements like that very often. More power to her, and to you for including such in MESSENGER.

Sara Speicher's article about the work of the World Council of Churches regarding nonviolence was very good. It seems the church is willing to talk nonviolence in Sunday school, but not at the polling booths.

Dale Aukerman's article on forgiveness is very much needed. I am still struggling with how, in this world, all force can be disavowed. I appreciated your editorial on the two Christmases. This is another area where it isn't easy to determine just how much simplicity or tinsel is accepable to God.

Phil Zinn
Tampa, Fla.

Church respects youth

From a Church of the Brethren youth who attended National Youth Conference and a Peace Academy at the Illinois/Wisconsin District Conference, thank you. Instead of promoting the hokey, demeaning pledges to wait for "true love" that some churches bother with, the Church of the Brethren has been encouraging youth to decide on something that really matters and to make important personal choices no one else encourages us to make. Pacifism is not advocated enough in the world today, even by many churches, although it can make the most Christ-like impact on God's world. The Peace Pledge we have taken shows that our church respects youth as mature adults, and that we are ready to prove ourselves as such.

Audrey DeCausey
York Center Church of the Brethren
Lombard, Ill.

The overpopulation problem

Assume that each of us directly or indirectly uses a body weight of material goods every day [see "Being good to God's good earth," November]. By my calculation, if there were half as many of us, only half as much stuff would be used, half as many cars and SUV's would congest our streets, etc. Why can't we understand that overpopulation is a major factor in many of our environmental and social problems.? If we have more than two children or four grandchildren, aren't we part of the problem?

Donald B. Mille
Corvallis, Ore

The opinions expressed in Letters are not necessaril those of the magazine. Readers should receive them i the same spirit with which differing opinions are expresse in face-to-face conversations.

Letters should be brief, concise, and respectful of th opinions of others. Preference is given to letters tha respond directly to items read in the magazine.

We are willing to withhold the name of a write only when, in our editorial judgment, it is warrante We will not consider any letter that comes to u unsigned. Whether or not we print the letter, th writer's name is kept in strictest confidence.

Address letters to Messenger *editor, 1451 Dunde Ave., Elgin, IL 60120.*

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Program Field Staff. The Association of Brethren Caregivers is seeking a full-time program field staff to be responsible for coordinating the program of the Denominational Deacon Ministry and other ministries, possibly Family Life Ministry and Lafiya: A Whole-Person Health Ministry. This position will fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Jay Gibble and June Gibble, who had shared this full-time position. Jay Gibble retired Jan. 1; June Gibble will retire mid-year.The ideal candidate will exhibit the following qualifications and qualities: relevant experience; appreciation of the special ministry of deacons within the Church of the Brethren; enthusiasm for the mission and ministries of ABC; understanding of the Church of the Brethren heritage, theology and polity; bachelor's degree in a related field; high energy and motivation for excellence; proficiency in interpretation and consensus building; excellent communication, organization and computer skills. Some travel will be required. Send letter of application, resume and three references to Steve Mason, Executive Director, ABC, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120.

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TRAVEL

Travel to Annual Conference in Milwaukee, with visi to Wisconsin Dells, Chicago, the Henry Ford Museum i Dearborn, Michigan, and the Brethren offices in Elgi For information please write to J. Kenneth Kreider, 130 Sheaffer Road, Elizabethtown PA 17022.

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7238 N. 61st Avenue
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111 N. Sun Valley Boulevard
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Sunday Services 10:15 AM

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Sunday Services 10:45 AM

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Sunday Services 10:00 AM

urning Points

ew Members

rcadia, Ind.: Aaron Hook, Adam Hook

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ridgewater, Va.: Chester and Eleanor Bowman, Brent and Karen Holl, Reta Kuper, Ann Wright, Carl and Madaline Zigler

hampaign, Ill.: Kay Leeds

ixon, Ill.: JoAnne Munson

ouglas Park, Chicago, Ill.: Jimmy Whitfield, Richard Rincon, Tony Asta

uPont, Ohio: Don Fisher, Wendy Fisher, Vickie Rayle, William Rayle IV, Chet Thomas, Lois Thomas

astwood, Akron, Ohio: Joel Abe, Yvonne Resch, Angela Moyer, Jessica Shives, Jennifer Shives, Revawn Wilson

nglish River, South English, Iowa: Kristen Stoner, Nicholas Stoner, Matthew Miller, Andrew Miller, Courtney Ballard Goldman, Nate Goldman

uernsey, Monticello, Ind.: Georgia Sanders, Larry Sterrett

anover, Pa.: James Bryner, Joan Bryner, Lois McCormick

ershey-Spring Creek, Hershey, Pa.:Alex Royal, Arthur Garrison, Mildred Garrison, Roy Gesford, Jacob Mellinger-Blouch, Gregory Waybright, Deanna Waybright

ones Chapel, Martinsville, Va.: Mike and Donna Luther, Michelle Luther, Erica Stump, Kristyn Wingfield, Tyler Dollarhite

ent, Ohio: Paul Ruley IV, Jill Wimer, Nicholas Wimer, Tom Smith, Dawna Smith, Amy Savarino, Marsha Fox, Tim Nelson, Melodie Gossett

ogansport, Ind.: Rick and Missy Nelson

arilla, Kaleva, Mich.: Beth Welch

echanicsburg, Pa.: Thomas Bowes, Robert Courtois, Merle Gutshall, Jeffrey and Patty Hammaker, Kevin and Lisa Lewellen, Roger and Donna Sturtz

iddle Creek, Lititz, Pa.: John Shenberger, Donna Shenberger, Shannon Shenberger, Jennifer Shenberger

ount Hermon, Bassett, Va.: Jason Haynes, John Edwards

okesville, Va.: Eric Michael Truschel, Arlene Iverson

livet, Thomville, Ohio: Jeff Ours, Mary Lou Stoltz, Brenda and Bobbi Jo Burnett, Jim and Judy Davisson, David Henderson, LouAnn Henderson, Ian Henderson, Annie Henderson

leasant Dale, Decatur, Ind.: Joel Burkhead, Earl Doll, Mike Geyer, Marilyn Geyer, Rachel Geyer, Crystal Geyer, Nathan Mugg, Marius Veres

leasant View, Burkittsville, Md.: Martha Moser, Dawna Beauchamp, Shirley Yoe

lumcreek, Shelocta, Pa.: Richard Orr, Guy and Norita Toy

oxbury, Johnstown, Pa.: Justin Hess, Tiffany Lint, Nicholas Petrovich, Carolyn Fisher, Linda Livingston, Mark Livingston, Ashley Livingston

Salkum, Wash.: Steve Craig, Joanne Cox, Gaudy Pfranger, Tyrel Vernard, Lou Ann Moore, Charli Vernard, Traci McDaniel, Christina Butterton, Christopher Clark, Derek Jackson Singleton, James Church, Martha Sturgeon, Lorena Lindley

Troutville, Va.: Adam R. Woodie

Waynesboro, Pa.: Grace Kelly Smith, David Hockenberry, Brian Angle, Nicholas Moyer, Angela Smith, Lori Mong, Shay Wolford, Amy Martin, Erica Mong, Emily Angle

West Goshen, Goshen, Ind: Janet Culp, Don and Carol Kennedy, Juanita Yoder

Woodbury, Pa.: Brent Houp, Nicole Love

Wedding Anniversaries

Brinkmeier, Reuben and Arlene, Pearl City, Ill., 60

Chandler, Jim and Marie, Nampa, Idaho, 55

Flora, David and Mabel, Bridgewater, Va., 50

Forrester, Raymond and Penny, Nokesville, Va., 50

Francy, Leonard and Margaret, Winlock, Wash., 55

Gillespie, William and Selena, Silver Lake, Ind., 60

Hamilton, David and Velma, Virden, Ill., 70

Jacoby, Paul and Anna, Coopersburg, Pa., 50

Jones, Vern and Bonnie, Avon Park, Fla., 50

Keenan, Harold and Helen, Onalaska, Wash., 65

Kinzie, James L. and Mable, Troutville, Va., 60

Lackey, Ted and Sally, Brunswick, Md., 50

Leckrone, Sam and Lucy, Copemish, Mich., 60

Miller, Russell and Catharine, North Hampton, Ohio, 50

Moore, Arthur and Genevieve, Nampa, Idaho, 72

Oxley, Derald and Audrey, Onalaska, Wash., 50

Pullin, Harold and Irma, Waterloo, Iowa, 65

Rader, John and Martha, Troutville, Va., 65

Smith, W. H. "Bill" and Ava, Bassett, Va., 65

Sowers, Glenn and Beatrice, Brunswick, Md., 50

Ulrig, John and Mary, Greenville, Ohio, 75

Williams, Bob and Evelyn, Mossyrock, Wash., 50

Zimmerman, Mim and Wib, Ligonier, Pa., 50

Deaths

Adamson, Theodore, 83, Onego, W.Va., Nov. 7

Anders, Cleo, Arcanum, Ohio, Dec., 1997

Armentrout, Jocie T., 90, Harman, W.V., Oct. 15

Belcher, W. Harold, 72, Fincastle, Va., May 10

Bower, Donald K., 89, Wichita, Kan., Oct. 23

Boyer, Mabel, 82, Shelocta, Pa., June 3

Boyers, Ira "Houck," 73, Harrisonburg, Va., Nov. 2

Bridge, C. Lucille Studebaker, 82, New Carlisle, Ohio, Oct. 30

Brown, Maxine, 72, Sugarcreek, Ohio, Nov. 20

Bucher, K. Esther, 87, Lancaster, Pa., Nov. 24

Buntain, Paul R., 86, Mossyrock, Wash.

Cable, John J., 87, Hollsopple, Pa., Oct. 22

Cade, Willis, 81, Monon, Ind., Nov. 2

Carpenter, Edna Miles, 91, Leonard, Mo., Oct. 8

Detwiler, J. Emory, 88, Roaring Spring, Pa., Oct. 5

Dresher, Doris, 81, Savoy, Ill., Oct. 4

Dick, Grace E., 92, Clymer, Pa., Sept. 17

Durbin, Michael L., 47, Danville, Ohio, Nov. 18

Dyarman, Clara, 72, Newville, Pa., July 23

Eikenberry, Charlotte, Lewisburg, Ohio, Feb., 1998

Fisher, John, 69, Roaring Spring, Pa., Oct. 22

Fouse, K. Evelyn, 74, Roaring Spring, Pa., Sept. 27

Fry, Edwin, Sinking Spring, Pa., Dec. 6

Fryman, Harold, 83, Goshen, Ind., Oct. 24

Gillespie, Donna Kay, 53, Brandywine, W.Va., Nov. 13

Glass, Hattie, Reading, Pa., Dec. 19

Grim, Robert N., 55, Spring Grove, Pa., Nov. 13

Gugleman, Wilma, 83, Ft. Wayne, Ind., Dec. 6

Heisey, David, 44, Farmington Hills, Mich., Nov. 27

Hollen, Francis, 87, Bridgewater, Va., Sept. 2

Honeyman, Noel, Laura, Ohio, Feb., 1998

Hostetler, Mary, 69, Hollsopple, Pa., Nov. 23

Hoy, Virginia Senseman, 91, Hamilton, Ohio, Dec. 4

Jordan, Ruth Crist, 92, Bridgewater, Va., Nov. 14

Kimmel, Julia, 77, Shelocta, Pa., Dec. 7

Kissinger, William G., 86, Waynesboro, Pa., Nov. 21

Knepp, Shirley A., 64, Martinsburg, Pa., Nov. 15

Knott, Ray M., 66, Dayton, Va., Nov. 15

Landes, Ralph, 92, Kansas City, Kan., Nov. 16

Long, John Daniel, 84, New Oxford, Pa., Nov. 6

Marquard, Grace, 99, Roaring Spring, Pa., Sept. 9

Marston, George Ray, 57, Mount Jackson, Va., Nov. 3

Maxson, Robert, 75, Elkhart, Ind., Sept. 25

Mendenhall, Bernice, 90, Waterloo, Iowa, Nov. 18

Merriman, Margaret, 95, Rocky Mount, Va., Dec. 3

Miller, Franklin D., 65, Moorefield, W.Va., Nov. 3

Miller, Garland, 86, Bridgewater, Va., Sept. 7

Miller, Roger, Laura, Ohio, Feb., 1998

Myers, Miriam, Laura, Ohio, Nov.

Norwood, Glenn, 72, Kokomo, Ind., Sept. 27

Pence, Edna, 93, Bridgewater, Va., Sept. 2

Ramsey, Brenda, 70, Hollsopple, Pa., June 12

Reber, Margarette, 84, N. Manchester, Ind., July 30

Rolston, Ursula Lewein, 92, Sheldon, Iowa, Feb. 25, 1998

Seybold, Faith Studebaker Owen, 97, Hamilton, Ohio, Dec. 6

Shaffer, Hollis W., 95, Whitewater, Kan., Nov. 28

Shearer, Ruth Seibel, Greenville, Ohio, Jan., 1998

Slusher, Ruth, Bridgewater, Va., Nov. 21

Smith, Ruth, Greenville, Ohio, Aug. 8

Sumpter, Richard, 67, N. Liberty, Ind., Aug. 11

Teaford, Gale, 91, Greenville, Ohio, Sept. 14

Teets, Roscoe R., Eglon, W.Va., Dec. 19

Thompson, Edith, Greenville, Ohio, Feb., 1998

Togasaki, Yoshiko, 93, Berkeley, Calif., Dec. 20

Trowbridge, Carol, 70, Wauneta, Neb., Dec. 1

Uhl, Edna, 82, Coopersburg, Pa., Oct. 17

VanSickle, Grace Hewitt, 101, Hazelton, W.Va., Nov. 14

Wantz, Anna P., 79, York, Pa., Nov. 7

Waud, Dorothy, 81, Quakertown, Pa., June 7

Weldy, Lewis L., 79, Bristol, Ind., Nov. 13

Weyant, Hattie, 85, Greenville, Ohio, Nov. 5

Weyant, Margaret E., 78, New Oxford, Pa., Nov. 15

Wiley, Helen E. March, 89, York, Pa., Nov. 7

Willis, Adeline, 90, Newville, Pa., Nov. 20

Wingert, Mary Shockey, 96, New Oxford, Pa., Nov. 4

Pastoral Placements

Bowser, Harold, from Holsinger, New Enterprise, Pa., to Diehls Crossroads, Martinsburg, Pa.

Ordinations

Christine, Michael L., Aug. 14, Maple Grove, Salix, Pa.

Cosner, Elmer, Nov. 14, Fairview, Oakland, Md.

Dueck, Stanley B., Nov. 1, Coventry, Pottstown, Pa.

Hess, John M., Feb. 14, 1998, Middle Creek, Lititz, Pa.

Miller-Rieman, Christen, Sept. 10, N. Manchester, Ind.

Min, Young, Feb. 8, 1997, Grace Christian, Upper Darby, Pa.

Ort, David, Beech Run, Mapleton Depot, Pa.

Satvedi, Valentina, Sept. 19, North County, San Marcos, Calif.

Licensings

Dell, Ernest, Nov. 7, Beech Run, Mapleton Depot, Pa.

Fix, Eleanor, Sept. 12, New Enterprise, Pa.

Hood, Dana, Sept. 10, Bachelor Run, Bringhurst, Ind.

Maclay, Connie, Sept. 12, Spring Run, McVeytown, Pa.

Nissly, Glenn, Oct. 20, Tear Coat, Augusta, W.Va.

Titzell, Linda S., July 15, Mechanicsburg, Pa.

Yazell, Juanita Louise, Aug. 20, East Dayton, Dayton, Ohio

Editorial

Kindling lights my fire

The snow and cold have kept me by the living room fireplace of evenings, reading, thinking, praying, listening to music. These have been warm but melancholy times, as I ponder bombs dropping on Iraq, and the impeachment trial, and a new year with opportunity to be more active in the struggle for justice and peace. Into my winter reverie came one day by mail the new CD album "Kindling Live!" by the Brethren folk band Kindling. This music has not only brought hope and joy to my fireside, but it has explained to me the times and my role in them.

I am no music writer, so it will be difficult for me to describe how these songs stir my soul. If it is true that they who sing pray twice, then it may also be said that they who sing for me pray for me twice. Kindling's music adds a dimension of truth to spiritual messages that we mere writers can't approach. The group's members are Steve Kinzie of La Verne, Calif., Shawn Kirchner of Chicago, Lee Krähenbühl of Kalamazoo, Mich., and Peg Lehman, of Elgin, Ill. Not only are they excellent musicians, they are committed Christians and Brethren on the cutting edge of our church's politics and witness. They had come together for a jam session almost by chance during the Cincinnati Annual Conference in 1996; I first heard them at a late-night concert during the 1997 Annual Conference in Long Beach, Calif. It was an extra-conference unofficial session, but there was more church there than at much of the sanctioned meeting. And then I saw them perform in Elgin, Ill., last June, the concert from which this live album was produced.

It is thrilling to hear Kindling live, but with "Kindling Live!" on CD I can go back to songs again and again. The one I go back to most is "Zion," written by Shawn Kirchner. The liner notes tell me the words are drawn from Psalm 46:4, Revelation 22:1-2, and the old hymn "Marching to Zion." From the beginning slow-but-determined piano in the rhythm of a spiritual, later joined by Kirchner's clear tenor, I am reassured that God is as aware as I am that bombs are dropping on Iraq. "There is a river/Whose streams flow forth/From Zion, the city of God." This reminds me that God's love and justice flow on without depending on me. "The trees of life/Grow upon its banks/Whose leaves bring the healing of the nations." Not I but God will bring the healing of the nations. As though to send home the song's statement of faith, Lee Krähenbühl takes off on a saxophone solo that makes my spirit soar.

Kindling is about the struggle for justice, but with God in charge. Strength for the struggle comes from within. These activists start with an active inner life, celebrated by Steve Kinzie's "The Place of Splendor," using words by the mystical spritual writer Jessica Powers. The gate to the outer world "lies in your soul" and "you must rise and go by inward passage from what earth you know." By my winter fire I hear God telling me to begin deep within. That's where strength and courage come from.

They also come from being loved. In the middle of this spiritual and political collection is a plain and simple love song. When Peg Lehman sings Randy Newman's "Feels Like Home," I think first of my joy that an old friend after years of loneliness has found a new love. ("If you knew how lonely my life has been/And how low I've felt for so long/If you knew how I wanted someone to come along/And change my life the way you've done. . ..") But then I look across the living room to the person by the fire with me, realizing that the only thing better than new love is seasoned love. ("And I'm all right 'cause I have you here with me/And I can almost see through the dark there's a light.") My home feels like home to me. And when things are good at home I can better face the world.

Grounded in home and inner peace, Kindling faces the world with, in Krähenbühl's memorable phrase, "no more afraiding." Persistence in the struggle for justice gets its theme song in "We Are Not Going Away" by Lee Krähenbühl. It will resonate with anyone who has ever carried a picket sign in protest. "We are not going away—We are not going away/God blesses the children who stand up and say/We are not going away." It encourages aging protesters not to get comfortable, but to keep making others uncomfortable. We are not going away. It reminds an old church to keep fighting the good fight. We are not going away.

And then if we are faithful, God can make the miracles happen. Steve Kinzie writes of his "Dream" in which there was a table with food enough for everyone, all those driven into exile became free, families were reunited, and vanquished tribes restored to dignity.

As I throw another log on my winter fire, I know this music answers my troubled prayer. Thank you God for Kindling.

"All those whose lives had been broken
by greed and hate, by bullet, bomb, and sword
in the beauty of that day, their tears were wiped away
and all their joy restored." —Fletcher Farrar

Readers may contact Kindling by e-mail at kindling@compuserve.com or by writing to 208 Edgemoo Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49001-4206.

Serving the Caring Ministries of the Church of the Brethren

The Association of Brethren Caregivers provides the denomination with many tools for caring ministries such as:

- Programing and Resources for Nine Ministry Groups
- Caring Ministries 2000
  June 1-4, 1999 – Elizabethtown, Pa.
- National Older Adult Conference
  September 11-15, 2000 – Lake Junaluska, N.C.
- Annual Forum for Brethren Retirement Communities
- Annual Health Promotional Sunday Resources
- CAREGIVING – A New Quarterly Publication Debuting in 1999
- National Deacon Workshop Tour and Training Events
- New Resources for End-of-Life Decision-Making
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For more information about ABC and its ministries, please call (800) 323-8039 and mention this ad in Messenger.

Association of
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CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

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Messenger

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Jesus Calls Peter

Then Jesus said to Simon,
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their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.
(Luke 5:10–11)

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To place an order or to request a brochure, call Brethren Press at 800-441-3712.

Messenger

Vol. 148, No. 2 March 1999 www.brethren.org

Editor: Fletcher Farrar
News: Nevin Dulabaum
Subscriptions: Vicki Roche
Publisher: Wendy McFadden
Designer: Marianne Sackett

On the cover: Some of the Brethren from the US and Nigeria gathered quickly for a photo outside the worship tent in Harare. Pictured are Julie Liggett, Wendy McFadden, Rebecca Kwabe, Judy Mills Reimer, George Reimer, Ken Miller-Rieman, and Kwanye Toma. Other Brethren at the WCC Eighth Assembly are pictured in the coverage that begins on page 9.

David Radcliff

Coming next issue

The April issue features a preview of the 213th Church of the Brethren Annual Conference, to be held in Milwaukee, including an interview with Moderator Lowell Flory.

Features

9 Our church at the World Assembly

Messenger publisher Wendy McFadden was part of the Church of the Brethren delegation to the World Council of Churches World Assembly in Harare, Zimbabwe. She reports on the state of world ecumenism, and where it may go in the next 50 years.

17 It takes more than food

Hunger wears many faces. It has many causes. And God's faithful must learn to battle hunger in all its complexities. David Radcliff, director of Brethren Witness, reports on the church's anti-hunger efforts, and the challenges it faces.

23 Mitch teaches economics

Sue Wagner Fields was planning to lead a Church of the Brethren delegation to Central America to study how global economics affects the poor. The plans were interrupted by a hurricane, which made the lessons all the more stark and urgent.

27 What to do with your anger

Frank Ramirez gets angry, though not as angry as writers of the Psalms. Those writers knew what to do with anger, and they let God have it!

Departments

2 From the Publisher
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31 Turning Points
32 Editorial

From the Publisher

When I arrived at the University of Zimbabwe in Harare, I noticed that many of the guards and cleaning women were wearing buttons that read, "Do something for peace." I figured the buttons had something to do with the World Council of Churches Assembly, but why a peace button? I wondered.

The next morning, one of the first people I encountered was E. Paul Weaver of the Church of the Brethren. He quickly handed me a button and said he had brought 4,000 to give away. Since he'd already been in town for several days, he'd given most of them away. He had 1,000 more to take to Nigeria, his next destination.

The peace buttons were E. Paul's idea, but made possible by family members who contributed the funds in memory of his brother, L. John Weaver, who died in 1997.

By the end of the 12-day assembly, it seemed everyone on campus was wearing a button. They were even spotted on people attending a soccer game in town, an event that had nothing to do with the ecumenical gathering.

I like to think that Church of the Brethren participation in the World and National Councils of Churches is a little like those buttons: We're small, but we make a quiet contribution that is noticed and appreciated.

But that's not the reason we are members. While we do have a contribution to make in these kinds of gatherings, the purpose of our participation should come from a different motivation. We should participate out of a desire to witness to the unity of Christ and to be enriched through fellowship with Christians from around the world.

In an article reprinted in the Aug. 21, 1948, *Gospel Messenger*, on the eve of the first WCC assembly, John C. Bennett wrote words that are still appropriate today: "When you think of the World Council of Churches and of Amsterdam, think not only of ecclesiastical machinery and of the gathering of a few church leaders and think of more than unity. Think also of the ways in which unity and rebirth have been combined in the life of the World Council. Here is a chance for the vision of each local church to become different if it is aware of its relation, not to a far-off meeting, but to the common life of the churches that are represented there."

As we reflect on the meeting in Harare, and as we prepare for our own assembly coming up in Milwaukee, may we be reminded that the work of Jesus is far greater than our own experience. God is able to work through imperfect gatherings of imperfect disciples. In the last worship service of the Harare assembly, Emilio Castro reminded us: "As a shaky ship we go on sailing, 'setting our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.' It is God's power, it is God's cause."

Wendy McFadden

How to reach us

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To view the official Church of the Brethren Web site, point your browser to http://www.brethren.org.

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Printed on recycled paper

Knob Creek marks 200 years of faithfulness

Knob Creek Church of the Brethren, Johnston City, Tenn., will be celebrating its bicentennial Sept. 19, 1999. Organized in 1799, it is the Brethren "Mother Church" of Tennessee.

Elder Samuel Garber rode 300 miles on horseback from Virginia to Tennessee to help organize a church, and after his visit the first love feast was held. In its early days the church had two pastors—one preached in English and the other preached in German.

For the first 35 years the congregation did not have a building but met in homes once a month. Two of the homes where the congregation met are still in use today. A log church building was built in 1834 and used until 1905, when the present church building was erected. In 1934 the Tennessee District Conference was held at Knob Creek to celebrate the centennial of the old church building. —Margaret Sherfey Holley

Knob Creek Church of the Brethren *as it looked in 1834 and today.*

OMA event focuses on conflict and ecology

The Outdoor Ministries Association of the Church of the Brethren held its professional growth event Nov. 19-23 at Camp Ithiel in Florida.

The group visited the coastland for a look at the ecology of Florida's wetlands, had lunch on the national seashore, and visited Cape Canaveral.

The camp leaders were introduced to Jerry Eller, who spoke to the group about how to deal with conflict and violence in school-age children and the teen population. Eller, a member of the New Covenant Fellowship Church of the Brethren, Gotha, Fla., is a school guidance counselor. He led the group through several mock demonstrations of teen violence, and methods of conflict management, avoidance, and resolution.

OMA (Outdoor Ministries Association) is committed to the educational ministry of Church of the Brethren camps in partnership with congregations, districts, and denominational and ecumenical groups. OMA supports the total ministry of the church, including education, evangelism, peace education, and stewardship of all resources.

—David Smalley

Remembered

Howard Sollenberger, 81, a Church of the Brethren member who served with the US State Department's Foreign Service Institute for 29 years as a Chinese languages and cultural specialist, died Jan. 19 in McLean, Va., after suffering a stroke.

Sollenberger grew up in China, where his parents served as missionaries. A Manchester College graduate, Sollenberger was employed by the Brethren Service Committee as director of Northern China in 1938-1940. After the US entered World War II, Sollenberger was drafted and entered Civilian Public Service. In 1963 he was the recipient of a State Department Superior Honor Award for "innovative leadership" and "unflagging dedication," calling his contribution to Foreign Service training "unparalleled in American diplomatic history."

End of musical era at Peters Creek church

The new year brought the end of an era at Peters Creek Church of the Brethren, Roanoke, Va., as Estelle Vinyard and Kathleen Craun retired together Jan. 1 as organist and pianist after 45 years of service. Each.

Although the two accompanied each other for a total of 90 years, their total service to the church totaled 145 years. Upon their retirement Jan. 1, Estelle had played 75 years for the church. Kathleen, who played for 70 years, had spent many of those early years at a Peters Creek mission point.

At 89, Vinyard had been the church's senior musician. She is a lifelong member of the congregation, having raised her daughter in the church as well, according to a recent *Roanoke Times* article. She started playing the piano at age 12 and learned to play the pump organ when one was donated to the congregation.

Craun, 85, a fourth-generation member of the church, attends church with her daughter and grandson. She, too, is a lifelong lover of music. As a 10-year-old, she would ride a pony over bumpy terrain to attend piano lessons from a cousin. At 12 she began accompanying her father to a nearby mission church he led where she played a

Northern Ohio District *"Live Report" cast includes: Elizabeth Beer, front, Leslie Lake, rear, and others, left to right, Sara Keegan, Jared Zuercher, Alysia Lubbers, and Joy Hostetler.*

Ohio group hits the road with General Board Live Report

Northern Ohio District in February and March will break new ground by taking an abbreviated version of the Church of the Brethren General Board's popular Annual Conference Live Report on the road.

They will tour eight churches with new material created by the General Board Live Report Committee. "It's fun to do a pilot project with such an enthusiastic and energetic group," said Beth Sollenberger Morphew, coordinator of the General Board's Area 2 Congregational Life Team. "They will be good spokespeople for the General Board."

pump organ.

For the past 45 years, the two have been fixtures at Peters Creek's piano and organ, and for the past 30 they have worked alongside Vinyard's daughter, Betty Lou Carter, who has served as director of the chancel choir and who, on Jan. 1, became the church's music director.

The three musicians were honored at a December reception for their longtime service.

Howard and Enid Rogers

Wakarusa honors a most active couple

Howard and Enid Rogers of the Wakarusa (Ind.) Church of the Brethren got a lot of attention last fall, when Howard celebrated his 90th birthday and the couple celebrated their 66th wedding anniversary on the same day. That's when their church and community recognized the couple for all the service and volunteer work they continue to do. Howard was featured in the local newspaper for his continuing work as a volunteer builder for Habitat for Humanity. He estimates he has done electrical wiring for 35 Habitat houses over the past 26 years of his retirement. Their pastor, Roger Eberly, writes that both Howard and Enid are active deacons, and he serves as church clerk. Howard plays the harmonica and Enid does skits with characters made out of potatos—including Dic-tater, Agi-tater, Spec-tater, and Hesi-tater. "We are truly glad to have Howard and Enid as active members and excellent role models," Eberly writes.

Worship workshop attracts 29 pastors

Twenty-nine Church of the Brethren Shenandoah District pastors on Jan. 12 attended a six-hour workshop titled "Brethren, We Have Met to Worship." Participants worshiped together, explored issues, shared insights and examples of what had worked for them, created worship components based on lectionary readings, and examined available resources. Julie Hostetter, coordinator of the General Board's Area 3 Congregational Life Team, served as planner and facilitator.

Youth work in Tijuana at Shalom Ministries

A few days south of the border working and visiting with their peers is how youth from Pacific Southwest District spent a February weekend. Led by Dena Gilbert, district youth minister from La Verne (Calif.) Church of the Brethren; Gilbert Romero and Fred Borne of Bella Vista Church of the Brethren, Los Angeles; and Linda Williams of San Diego Church of the Brethren, the 32 youth and advisers visited Shalom Ministries, located just across the Mexican border in Tijuana. The group participated in service projects of cleaning out a gully to help prevent future flooding, preparing bags of food for distribution, and preparing a site for an outhouse.

The group's weekend concluded with a visit to the Tijuana landfill, where they distributed food to people living in or scavenging within the dump. Shalom Ministries has longstanding ties to the Bella Vista church and other Church of the Brethren congregations. At National Youth Conference '98, an evening offering raised $10,013 to assist Shalom's ministries.

Marilyn Delk, *coordinator of volunteers at The Brethren's Home, looks on as Clara Reed, auxiliary director, and Alberta McAdams, auxiliary treasurer, present gifts to Robert D. Cain, Jr., president and CEO.*

Auxiliary presents gifts to Greenville Brethren's Home

The Auxiliary of the Brethren's Home Retirement Community, Greenville, Ohio, recently demonstrated their ongoing generosity by making three gifts. Two were given to support the resident financial assistance programs, and the third gift was used to purchase four specialized wheelchairs. Funds for the gifts, which totaled $5,600, were raised during 1998 through bake sales and the annual fall bazaar. The Auxiliary, organized in 1959, is made up of a nine-member cabinet and many "keyworkers" from the churches of the Southern Ohio District.

"In Touch" profiles Brethren we would like you to meet. Send story ideas and photos to "In Touch," MESSENGER, *1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120.*

Diaz is new campus minister at McPherson College

Manny Diaz was installed in February as McPherson (Kan.) College's campus minister during the college's weekly chapel service. Assisting with the installation was Richard Hanley, executive of the Church of the Brethren Western Plains District. Until Jan. 31, Diaz had been serving part-time as an Area 4 Congregational Life Team member for the Church of the Brethren General Board and as part-time executive of Southern Plains District.

New campus minister: *Don Booz, pastor of the McPherson (Kan.) congregation, with Manny Diaz, the new McPherson campus minister, and Rich Hanley, Western Plains district executive.*

- Earl Traughber has been called to serve as the new part-time executive of Idaho District, beginning Feb. 1. Traughber retired from the pastorate in 1994 after serving 30 years. In addition to formerly holding pastorates in Illinois and Missouri, he previously served as Idaho District's executive for eight years. Traughber currently is serving as a project director for the Church of the Brethren General Board's Emergency Response/Service Ministries.
- Lyall Sherred and his wife, Vivian, departed the US in February for Nigeria, where he will teach Bible and Christian doctrine for six months at Kulp Bible College, near Mubi. The Sherreds are from Denver, Colo. Lyall is a retired college professor who has served as interim pastor at Prince of Peace Church of the Brethren in Denver.

General Board finishes 1998 with healthy budget surplus

Heading into the first full year under its new design, the Church of the Brethren General Board in 1998 had many questions about finances.

Those questions were answered with exclamation points in February, as the Board's pre-audit figures were released, showing a net income over expense of $622,110.

In trying to create a budget that would sustain the Board for at least five years without major adjustments, the Board had approved income of $5,329,000 and expenses of $5,105,000. The $224,000 budgeted surplus was intended to replenish reserves used during the redesign process.

Although congregational giving declined by about $25,000, strong response to its direct mail, bequest, and investment and other income categories pushed the Board's 1998 income to $5,919,723. Meanwhile, it spent $203,700 less than budgeted.

"This positive outcome was because of more income than budgeted and careful underspending," said Judy Keyser, treasurer.

As a result, the Board was able to transfer $227,563 into its bequest quasi endowment and finance $168,750 in special one-time expenses and still close its year-end books with $622,110 of income over expense.

Three of the Board's five ministries that rely on fees or sales also concluded 1998 with income over expense—MESSENGER ($25,000), Emergency Response/Service Ministries ($12,000), and SERRV International ($226,000). Two units ran deficits—Brethren Press ($57,000) and New Windsor Conference Center ($47,000).

"Even with much staff transition,

new ministries, and major expense reductions, we can feel positive about the outcomes in this first full year," Keyser said. "A long-term approach and continued financial support will ensure the ministries of the larger church in the future."

Board sends seed and goats to suffering North Koreans

A $170,000 Global Food Crisis Fund (GFCF) grant for North Korea was approved in February by the Church of the Brethren General Board's Executive Committee in response to the continuing food emergency in the east Asian country.

"It is estimated that as many as 3 million people have perished from hunger-related causes since 1995," said David Radcliff, who manages GFCF as the General Board's director of Brethren Witness. "This would equal over 12 percent of the population." Radcliff added that the 1998 grain harvest was over 1 million tons short of the 4.5 million tons needed to provide adequate rations nationwide.

The current GFCF grant will provide 105 metric tons of barley seed and 160,000 pounds of early maturing seed potatoes. It will also contribute $45,000 toward a new North Korea relief initiative launched by Church World Service, and provide $50,000 to send 100 dairy goats this summer. The goats will have a milk production capacity four times that of North Korean goats. A portion of the barley seed will be used by families to grow seed for next year's crop, lessening their dependence on outside seed supplies.

Church of the Brethren congregations and individuals are encouraged to support this latest North Korea relief effort, Radcliff said. "North Korea continues to need massive assistance from the outside world," he stated. "We are working at ways of not just meeting immediate needs but helping the people of North Korea build a more sustainable future."

Upcoming: Caring Ministries and Young Adult Conference

Caring Ministries 2000 is planned for June 1-4, 1999, at Elizabethtown (Pa.) College. With the theme "Be transformed in body, mind, and spirit," this second biennial conference, sponsored by Association of Brethren Caregivers, is focused on helping people find health and wholeness to meet the crises of life.

Major speakers include Phil Yancey, author of *What's So Amazing about Grace* and *The Jesus I Never Knew;* Ginny Thornburgh of the National Organization for Disabilities; Barbara Lundblad of Union Theological Seminary of New York; Staccato Powell of the National Council of Churches; Robert Raines, director of the Kirkridge Center, author, and United Church of Christ pastor; Melva Wilson Costen, professor of worship and music at Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, Ga.; John Shea, research professor at the Institute for Pastoral Studies, Loyola University, Chicago; and Phillip Stone, president of Bridgewater (Va.) College.

More than 60 workshops will feature additional leaders. Workers in healthcare vocations, pastors, and deacons are especially encouraged to attend. For more information, contact ABC at abc@brethren.org or at 800-323-8039.

Looking for something to do over Memorial Day weekend? Consider the Young Adult Conference, which has been moved from its traditional Thanksgiving time to a different holiday, Memorial Day.

This year's theme will be "One Creation under God." David Radcliff will be leading the conference in exploring issues of health and hope, peace and community, as a creation rather than as a nation. Young Adult Conference will include in-depth workshops, worship services, the annual variety show, outdoor games, and the music leadership of Joseph Helfrich.

For those who want to be especially near to creation, tenting areas will be available. The dates for the 1999 Young Adult Conference are May 29-31 and the location will be Camp Woodland Altars in Peebles, Ohio. To register or find out more information about the conference, call the Youth and Young Adult Ministry Office at 800-323-8039.

BBT offers family-friendly Internet access and e-mail

A national Internet service using a values-based filter that will screen out undesirable content is what Brethren Benefit Trust's newly created Internet business will offer Church of the Brethren members early this spring.

The first product, scheduled to be launched in mid-March, will be filtered Internet access memberships and e-mail service through BBT's ClearViewNet.com. This new service has been designed to filter out potentially offensive Web content by applying screens to 30 categories of content including violence, hate, pornography, gambling, and homework cheating, as well as sites delivering sexually oriented material.

As the basically unsupervised world of the Internet attracts a wider audience, ClearViewNet.com promises to be "the first family-friendly Internet portal" that applies a continuously updated filter to Web sites and information obtained through subject searches.

"Our intent is to create a gateway to the Web that provides simple, safe access to Internet resources — the way the Internet was meant to be used," said Michael Addison, director of BBT's Information Systems. "This is important to Brethren families who want to make sure an intelligent gatekeeper is constantly watching over their children as they explore the world of the Internet. It is equally important to individuals and employers who want access to information without the distraction and disruption of potentially offensive sites cluttering the search process."

ClearViewNet.com was scheduled to be activated in mid-March for $19.95 a month. For more information contact clearviewnet_bbt@brethren.org or call 800-250-5757.

Chiefs exchange launches south Sudan peace effort

Nairobi, Kenya—On Feb. 11 the New Sudan Council of Churches announced that a historic effort at reconciling Sudan's two largest tribes is being launched with a high-profile exchange of visits by Nuer and Dinka chiefs to each other's areas. This is the first stage of moving toward a major indigenous peace conference.

Phil and Louie (Louise) Rieman, pastors of Wabash (Ind.) Church of the Brethren, are in the region helping to make preparations for the peace conference. Sponsored on this trip by the General Board's Global Mission Partnerships Office, the Riemans served as missionaries in Sudan for 3 1/2 years.

The meetings are in Bahr el Ghazal, which has become known around the world in the past year with the devastating famine, rooted in the seemingly endless conflict. After more than seven years of fighting and untold levels of suffering, a people's peace movement is underway, facilitated by the New Sudan Council of Churches and with the active support of the military and civil administrations in the area.

This peace conference is an outgrowth of a nine-day peace conference that was held in June 1998 among key border chiefs and church leaders of the Dinka and Nuer from both sides of the Nile River in southern Sudan.

The chiefs are going to the site to discuss security for the conference and to see the conference site.

Both the security and the site of the conference are unlike what may be expected in other conferences, sponsored by governments or international organizations and held in plush hotels or palaces. The Serbia-Kosovo conference in France was held under the threat of NATO bombing attacks, pressured with a two-week time line, and presented with a peace accord written by the international community. By contrast, in south Sudan the Dinka are inviting hundreds of Nuer to come into their land unarmed and trust the Dinka to provide security for the conference.

The Nuer chiefs will sit with their Dinka counterparts and with some of the top leadership of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement and discuss ways to be confident that they can advise their people from Nuerland to come into enemy territory and feel safe.

Dinka youth and community have been working for months to build a village of peace to host the peace conference. About 150 toukels (mud and thatch homes) have been built along with a meeting house to seat 1,000 and stores to keep supplies secure.

At the end of the visit to Dinkaland, both Dinka and Nuer will board a plane and fly to Nuerland in Western Upper Nile. This will be an opportunity for them to show their unity of commitment to make peace, to report on the results of their discussions about security, and to tell the people of the work that has been accomplished to prepare the site for the peace conference.

Once the actual conference begins, many will walk for days through difficult terrain to attend. The price of peace will not come lightly. But the peacemakers in the bush of southern Sudan are taking the initiative for peace. —*New Sudan Council of Churches*

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Hammering out hope in Harare

By Wendy McFadden

The Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches was about relationships.

Of course, the delegates voted on world issues such as human rights, Jerusalem, the challenges of globalization, and debt cancellation. But the work that might have more long-term significance had to do with who the council is and how it will proceed into the future.

In a set of meetings that were both introspective and celebratory, the WCC wondered aloud about the kinds of questions that face many 50-year-olds: What have I accomplished? Should I make a major change in the way I'm living? What things are important to me?

The lengthiest discussions of the assembly were given to debate about a policy statement called "Towards a Common Understanding and Vision." Something of an "ecumenical charter," the statement sets the context by outlining some of the changes in the world over the past 50 years. It carefully rehearses the changing self-understanding of the council and suggests implications for the future. And it speaks to the relationships the WCC has with many kinds of ecumenical partners.

While the delegates officially received the policy statement, it was regarded as a touchstone, a point of reference, a "continuous process," and not a finished document. This process, said the delegates, "calls the World Council of Churches decisively to deepen, as well as broaden, the fellowship which we share as churches."

At the recommitment service, *church leaders exchanged crosses with each other. Judy Mills Reimer exchanged crosses with Bishop Zacharias Mar Theophilus of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of India. The cross she carried with her to Harare was the Church of the Brethren logo handcrafted in metal by Ray Sollenberger of Everett, Pa.*

How can its Christian fellowship be deepened? Perhaps the Council need look only as far as its own worship services. To allow the spirit and grace of the worship tent to infect the assembly hall might transform the business proceedings. To exchange papers and speeches for hymns might change the outcome of the votes. To replace partisan applause for prayerful amens might bind delegates together more firmly than a policy statement.

The emphasis on relationships was evident in the jubilee banner of the assembly. According to the biblical tradition, every 50th year was to be a year of jubilee. "Land and animals were to rest, debts were to be cancelled, land was to be returned to its original owners," explains Sebastian Bakare, chaplain of the University of Zimbabwe. "The jubilee year was, in short, a year of grace. . . . "The spirit of jubilee was also one of rededication to the needs of the poor." (*The Drumbeat of Life*).

The assembly theme, "Turn to God —Rejoice in Hope," was seen as apt for a jubilee anniversary. It was the basis for discussion of repentance and conversion, of the hope that comes because of God's love. The delegates said, "The one ecumenical movement is not, first of all, about programs, structures, and cooperation. Rather, the foundation for all our ecumenical engagement is our response to God. It asks for nothing less than conversion of our hearts."

The emotional climax of the assembly was the 50th-anniversary celebration, "Journey to Jubilee." Through video, narration, and live appearances of key personalities, some of the defining moments of the WCC's history came alive. At the conclusion, narrator Pauline Webb, summarized: "We praise God for all that is past. We trust God for all that is to come."

The peace chuches pay attention

This assembly attracted more than three dozen members of the historic peace churches—Church of the Brethren, Mennonites, and Quakers. They gathered informally three times to discuss matters of common interest, particularly the WCC's Program to Overcome Violence (see December).

Members of these churches were gratified when the assembly voted to launch a Decade to Overcome Violence, an emphasis inspired in part by the United Nations decision last November to proclaim an International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World.

The proposal for the WCC's decade was made by Fernando Enns of the Mennonite Church in Germany. In Harare he became the first Mennonite to be elected to the WCC's central committee. While North American Mennonites are not members of the WCC, the Dutch and German Mennonite churches are founding members.

Historic peace church members also followed with interest the assembly's approval of a statement condemning the use of children as soldiers. The issue was introduced by the Quakers, who have been working for decades to convince the international community to address the problem of young people under the age of 18 being forced to serve in the military.

Various other peace-related issues emerged during the assembly, as participants discussed problems such as violence against women, the prevalence of small arms, nuclear disarmament, conflict resolution, and the theological basis for peacemaking.

Among the Brethren attending *the WCC assembly were US delegates Julie Liggett (front left) and Judy Mills Reimer (far right) and Nigeria delegates Bitrus Bdlia (left) and Karagama Gadzama (right). Wendy McFadden (center) and Ken Miller-Rieman (back), who was the Church of the Brethren's alternate delegate, were accredited media.*

The elusive goal of unity

Based on reports leading up to the assembly, some people feared that rising dissatisfaction among the Orthodox churches would cause the WCC to implode at its 50th birthday party. The outcome was far better than that, though there were tense moments.

Two Orthodox churches—those from Georgia and Bulgaria—have withdrawn from the council, and the large Russian Orthodox Church sent only a skeletal delegation. Some of the debate sounded harsh, but the frankness might also indicate the level of seriousness with which differences are being discussed.

On the surface, the issues seem to be ones that cause controversy in other places as well—governance, the role of women, homosexuality. However, the issues likely are more fundamental. Contributing to the current situation are significant changes within Orthodox churches following the end of the Cold War. The ferment within these bodies makes more distinct the basic cultural and theological differences between the Protestant and Orthodox worlds.

The delegates voted to establish a special commission to resolve the issue of the participation of the Orthodox churches. Just hours later, the Russian Orthodox Church delegation announced it was suspending its participation in the WCC's central committee while the special commission conducts its deliberations. That task is expected to take at least three years.

Mandela delivers hope

Ken Miller-Rieman

South African president Nelson Mandela was the highlight of the "Journey to Jubilee" 50th anniversary celebration. Excerpts from his speech:

"The fact that on your 50th anniversary you have chosen Africa as the venue for your deliberations on the challenges of the new millennium bears witness to your continuing solidarity with all who strive for peace and dignity.

"Thirty years ago you launched a program that broke new ground and set new directions for the future. You moved beyond the affirmation of the right to resist on the part of the oppressed, to the risk of active engagement in struggle to end oppression. Today the WCC is called upon to show that same engagement in the new and more difficult struggle for development and the entrenchment of democracy.

"It is a great privilege for me, as my public life draws to a close, to be allowed to share these thoughts and dreams of a better world with you. I do so filled with hope, knowing that I am amongst men and women who have chosen to make the world the theatre of their operations in pursuit of freedom and justice."

50 years ago

Who was there

At the first WCC assembly, held in Amsterdam in 1948, the Church of the Brethren was represented by M. R. Zigler and Raymond R. Peters. Also participating were alternates J. Quinter Miller and Calvert N. Ellis; a youth representative, Carl Myers; and two official observers, Floyd E. Mallott and Doreen Myers.

"It was a thrilling event," recalls Carl Myers, who lives in Elgin, Ill. "Just to recall it chills my spine."

Padare

A marketplace of ideas

New to this assembly was the padare, an experiment in which member churches and related organizations were invited to sponsor sessions or exhibits for freewheeling exchanges of information. This marketplace of ideas ("padare" is the Shona word for "meetingplace") was intended to be an unofficial place for dialog that would feed into the official business of the assembly.

The final evaluation was mixed, with praise for the concept being tempered by the confusion of some 550 events spread across the university campus. One could question the wisdom of devoting more time to such reporting from member churches than was given to reporting on and evaluating the actual work of the council. Each unit's work was reported on in a series of three hearings, while the padare stretched out over four days. Then a major part of the council's business was compressed into one final day.

The Padare Advisory Group maintained that "padare has influenced the deliberations of the assembly in a positive way." The group said, "The forums were issue-oriented, and less dominated by personalities. Minority people and views found space for unfettered expression. It has been a major context for encounter and exchange with local Zimbabweans, who have attended padares in large numbers."

The advisory group reported the evaluation of a participant from India: "In many years of attending large group gatherings like this, this week was the first time I felt visible, heard, and respected."

Women-to-Women

The WCC's Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women officially came to a close with a festival just prior to the assembly. It attracted more than two thousand women, including Julie Liggett and Pam Brubaker from the Church of the Brethren, who attended on their own. The WCC launched the Ecumenical Decade in 1988 to encourage member churches to study and review their structures and teachings to ensure full participation of women. The Church of the Brethren was one of many churches that endorsed the Decade.

By Julie Liggett

The Ecumenical Decade Festival was a powerful experience for me. The daily worships were especially creative and meaningful, and we listened for God's guidance about how to help women in the future. During the Decade, the WCC found that women deal with the same kinds of problems and issues whether we live in rich, powerful nations or poorer, developing countries.

The main focus that emerged from our gathering was the need to end violence against women in every aspect of our lives—home, workplace, church. We wrote a strong message against violence and presented it to the WCC Assembly.

Prior to the festival, I took part in "Women-to-Women" visits that had been arranged to coincide with the festival and the assembly. African women had invited women from around the world to stay in their homes and learn about their culture. More than a thousand of us responded, visiting homes in 50 different African countries. I was one of five who went to Mpumalanga, South Africa.

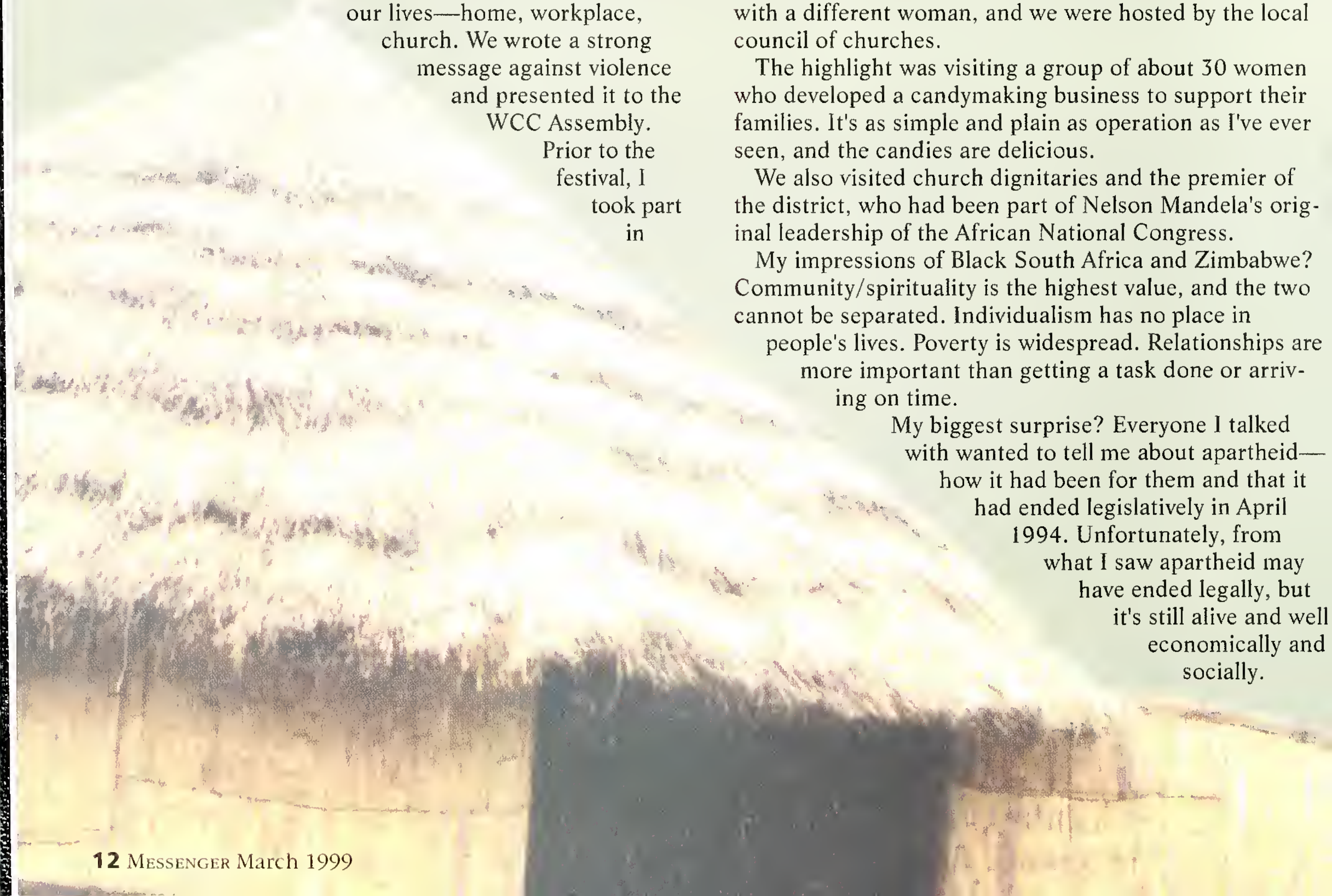
I spent the first two days in Soweto, the Black township of Johannesburg, in a home of extreme poverty. The whole community welcomed me! Then I flew to Mpumalanga to meet my fellow travelers. We each stayed with a different woman, and we were hosted by the local council of churches.

The highlight was visiting a group of about 30 women who developed a candymaking business to support their families. It's as simple and plain as operation as I've ever seen, and the candies are delicious.

We also visited church dignitaries and the premier of the district, who had been part of Nelson Mandela's original leadership of the African National Congress.

My impressions of Black South Africa and Zimbabwe? Community/spirituality is the highest value, and the two cannot be separated. Individualism has no place in people's lives. Poverty is widespread. Relationships are more important than getting a task done or arriving on time.

My biggest surprise? Everyone I talked with wanted to tell me about apartheid—how it had been for them and that it had ended legislatively in April 1994. Unfortunately, from what I saw apartheid may have ended legally, but it's still alive and well economically and socially.



50 years ago

Christ is not small

"Our guide, a 17-year-old lad with blond hair, was thrilled by meeting so many foreigners. He kept asking questions, finally turning to me and inquiring 'What is the name of your church in America?'

"'I am a member of the Church of the Brethren, a small denomination,' I replied, knowing that this designation would mean little to him.

"'But Christ is not small,' he responded with his big eyes sparkling. 'I have helped to guide people today from the whole world!' In these simple words he expressed eloquently the faith and spirit of Amsterdam."—*Ernest Lefever, reporter for the* **Gospel Messenger,** *Oct. 16, 1948*

Altogether it was a wonderful and enlightening trip! I have a new appreciation for women who continue to struggle in spite of overwhelming difficulties, and a new appreciation for cultures so different from my own.

Julie Liggett was the Annual Conference-elected delegate to the WCC Eighth Assembly. A former pastor, she works out of Denver, Colo., as Rocky Mountain regional director for Church World Service. After the WCC Assembly, she spent four days in Mozambique visiting a CWS program called Guns for Tools. CWS gives equipment such a farm tools, sewing machines, and bicycles in exchange for guns and bullets. Liggett was sent into the bush as part of a negotiating team, visiting small villages saturated with guns and ammunition from the former Soviet Union. Her job was to record and photograph the exchanges.

Liggett is available to speak to congregations about the WCC Assembly or about Church World Service. Contact her at 303-367-4980 or juliel@ncccusa.org.

A symbol of renewal

At the opening of the festival, nine women from around the world carried vessels of water representing women's tears and poured the water into a large bowl on the altar.

"I bring the tears of African women, of those who survived and those who never made it," said the first woman. "Our tears as victims of war and internal conflicts. Our tears as women whose story was never told. Our tears as women, struggling to survive because of national debts and global economic control."

Reporting later to the Eighth Assembly delegates, one speaker described the paradox of water—which is essential for life but which can also destroy. "However, there is one type of water for which no paradox exists: the living water offered by Jesus" to the woman at the well.

"Water, therefore, is not only a symbol of our solidarity with one another, but most importantly, a symbol of the renewal of our love for and faith in our Lord, Jesus Christ. 'For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes'" (Rev. 7:17 RSV).

Assembly connects with Sudan crisis

The conflict in Sudan came into the spotlight at the assembly, primarily through the eloquent testimony of Bishop Paride Taban, a Sudanese leader well known to Brethren who have worked in southern Sudan. He delivered the message at an Africa Day Celebration in Rufaro Stadium.

He pleaded with "this great fellowship of Christians" to help bring a lasting and just peace to the people of Sudan. "The people of Sudan told me to speak out, to be their voice," he said.

Critiquing those who do only relief work in Sudan, he said, "Spending on relief alone is like fattening a cow for slaughter. How long can one be doing relief without spending time, energy, and resources on root causes?"

Six days after the bishop's passionate speech, the government of Sudan began bombing raids on Narus, where he has his office. Reportedly, 14 bombs exploded in the town square, killing 6 people and seriously wounding 14 others. The bombs damaged a cathedral and the Blessed Bakhita Girls School, which is one of the projects supported by the Church of the Brethren General Board's Global Food Crisis Fund.

Church leaders suspected that the attack was in retribution for Bishop Taban's sermon to the WCC. Weeks later, the bombings were still going on..

Wendy McFadden

Ken Miller-Rieman *introduces himself to Bishop Paride Taban, who several years ago worked in southern Sudan with his parents, Phil and Louie Rieman, and with Roger and Carolyn Schrock.*

50 years ago

The grace of God

"Two facts stood out above all others at Amsterdam: first, the terrible condition of mankind and second, the grace of God. . . .

The remarkable event at Amsterdam was not the differences but rather the large measure of agreement."—*Calvert N. Ellis, president, Juniata College,* Gospel Messenger, *Nov. 6, 1948*

Peter Williams/WCC

Out of Africa

The Eighth Assembly was enlivened by African art, African music and dance, and a larger-than-usual number of participants from across the continent. Most important, perhaps, was the inclusion of an African point of view throughout the assembly by way of major addresses, smaller meetings, and a poignant drama. Frequent mention was made of the fact that the "center of gravity" of the church worldwide has shifted from Europe and North America to Africa.

The WCC agreed to place "a special emphasis on Africa during the beginning of the 21st century," pledging to join in the process of reconstruction and reconciliation within Africa, through "respect for human rights, promotion of an alternative economic order, debt relief, reductions in the arms trade, and urgent measures to bring peace and justice in the Sudan, the Great Lakes region, and other areas of conflict in Africa in particular and the world at large."

According to Zimbabwean theologian Sebastian Bakare, "The challenge to the church in Africa in the next millennium is to develop a theology which will enable African Christians to own the church instead of being mere custodians of it. The ownership of Christianity carries with it a deep sense of acountability, responsibility, and commitment. Africans cannot own Eurocentric or ethnocentric Christianity unless it is entirely immersed into African spirituality and is born again. That is what "incarnation" is all about. It transforms those who are born again, causing them to grow into the image of Christ" (*The Drumbeat of Life*).

Wendy McFadden

Ken Miller-Rieman.

About Zimbabwe

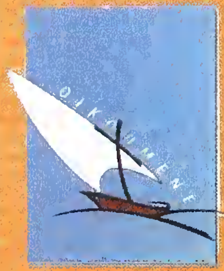
The assembly was held in Harare, capital of Zimbabwe. Known as Rhodesia before it gained its independence from England in 1980, Zimbabwe derives its name from the Shona *dzimbadzemabwe*, which means "houses of stone."

It's estimated that more than 20,000 people lost their lives in the war for liberation, a struggle that divided Christians both within the country and beyond its borders.

One of the WCC's most controversial actions was its decision almost three decades ago to grant $143,000 from its Special Fund for the Program to Combat Racism to the Zimbabwean liberation fighters. While the grant was given for humanitarian needs, some objected to giving money to organizations that used violence.

Zimbabwe is one of the most industrialized countries in Africa, but it suffers today from poverty, the highest incidence of AIDS in the world, and an increasingly dictatorial government.

The WCC at a glance



What is the WCC? In the WCC's own words: "A fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior according to the Scriptures, and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

What does the council do? The WCC calls churches to the goal of visible unity; facilitates churches' common witness and supports them in their worldwide missionary and evangelistic task; expresses churches' common concern in the service of human need and the promotion of justice and peace; and fosters renewal of the churches in unity, worship, mission, and service.

How many members are there? After welcoming 8 new members, the WCC now numbers 339 member churches from more than 100 countries. When the WCC was formed in 1948, most of its original 147 churches were in Europe and North America. Now a majority of member churches are in the South.

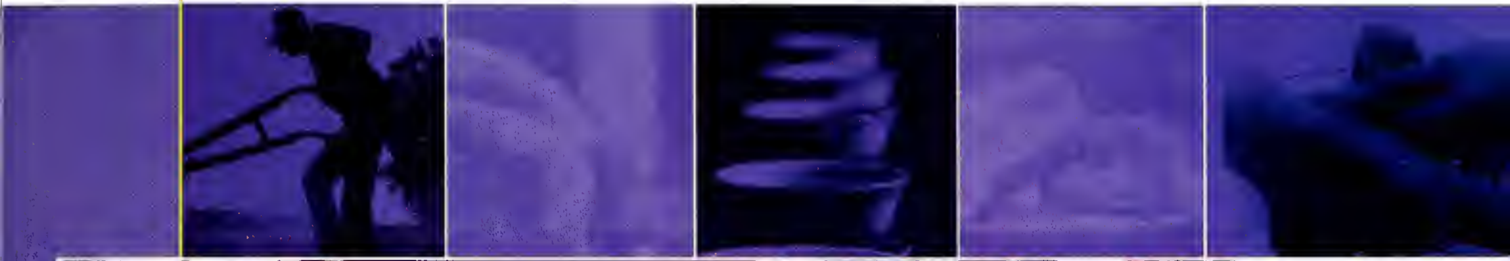
Who funds the council? Each member church is expected to make a minimum contribution (1,000 Swiss francs) to the WCC, though 48 percent do not make any contribution at all. Just under 40 percent of WCC income comes from Germany. The next biggest funders are Sweden, the Netherlands, and the USA.

When were the previous assemblies? Amsterdam 1948, Evanston 1954, New Delhi 1961, Uppsala 1968, Nairobi 1975, Vancouver 1983, Canberra 1991.

Who leads the council? A 158-member central committee meets every 12 to 18 months. The general secretary is Konrad Raiser. Elected to a second term as moderator is His Holiness Aram I, head of the Armenian Orthodox Church. The assembly also chose two vice moderators and eight presidents representing different regions of the world. At the assemblies, which take place about every seven years, delegates review the council's past work and set direction for the next seven years.

Why does the WCC use a boat for its logo? This symbol portrays the church as a ship afloat on the sea of the world with the mast in the form of a cross. It is not clear when the symbol was first adopted for the ecumenical movement, but it was in use before the inauguration of the WCC in 1948. The symbol probably has its origin in the Gospel stories of Jesus calling the fishermen and Jesus calming the storm. The boat pictured above is an African version of the traditional ecumenical ship.

AT HOME & AFAR



CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
DISASTER RESPONSE

Church of the Brethren
General Board Ministries

AT HOME & AFAR

At home and afar, what are the moments, the experiences, the values that define the Church of the Brethren? Depicted below are six stories from General Board ministries that give insight into the Brethren calling.

Continuing the work of Jesus.
Peacefully.
DEFINING

Not only does Brethren Disaster Response build churches destroyed by arson and houses leveled by tornadoes, it strengthens the community of the Living Christ. A Brethren Disaster Response unit in Alabama was joined by workers from Butler Chapel AME Church in South Carolina (see photo on cover and above). Together AME and Brethren volunteers bear witness to the unity that is theirs in Jesus Christ.

On the heels of Hurricane Mitch, Global Mission Partnerships mounted one of the first medical teams to go to Honduras, and the Brethren Service Center dispatched one of the first shipments of tents and medicines. With ecumencial partners, Brethren continue to assist recovery and development efforts in Honduras and Nicaragua.

Innovative youth ministry remains in the forefront of Brethren life, as in Northern Ohio wh a youth cast is tour eight churches with special rendition of the General Board Live Report. The message testifies to oneness of Christ's mission—local, distr national, and global.

Defining moments occur as people come to know one another in Christ, as they enter into Christ's saving work, and as they become living signs of love.

Defining moments take place as people reach out to help those who live on the margin, as they keep alive the vision of God's peaceable kingdom, and as they become agents of God's grace.

In sum, defining moments, particularly for Brethren, come in "Continuing the work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together."

mply.
Together.
Another way of living

MOMENTS

Days after Bishop Paride Taban pleaded with the World Council of Churches Assembly for nations to help end genocide in Sudan, his home town of Narus was bombed, damaging the cathedral and the only girls' primary school in southern Sudan. A three-year, $238,000 Partnership for Peace Initiative of the Church of the Brethren helps support the school.

To help Faith Church of the Brethren, Batavia, Ill., recover from a devastating fire, Brethren churches in the Chicago area and Congregational Life Teams staged a benefit performance by Ted and Lee drama team that raised $4,000. Humor, fellowship, celebration go far in helping assuage loss and discouragement.

After 10 years of co-pastoring the 125-year-old Antioch congregation in Virginia, Gerald and Rebecca Baile Crouse are now coordinators of the young Church of the Brethren mission in the Dominican Republic. There they and their three children aspire to walk with the people and become a bridge across cultural and theological perspectives.

AT HOME & AFAR

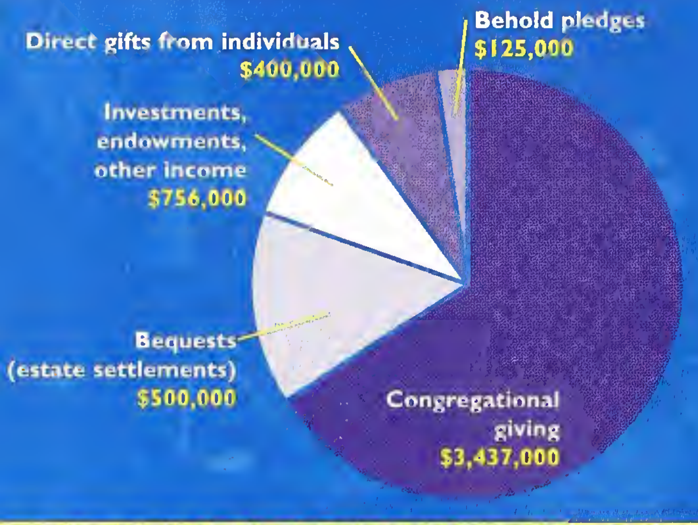
Executive Director. Administers work of General Board. Coordinates Leadership Team. Heads ecumenical representation. Oversees human resources. Spiritual guidepost for staff and General Board ministries. $680,330

Brethren Press. Fosters identity, unity, and vision. Publishes books, curriculum, *Messenger*, *Agenda*, *Source*, *Newsline*, Web Page, Yearbook. Interprets program, conducts news service. $269,130

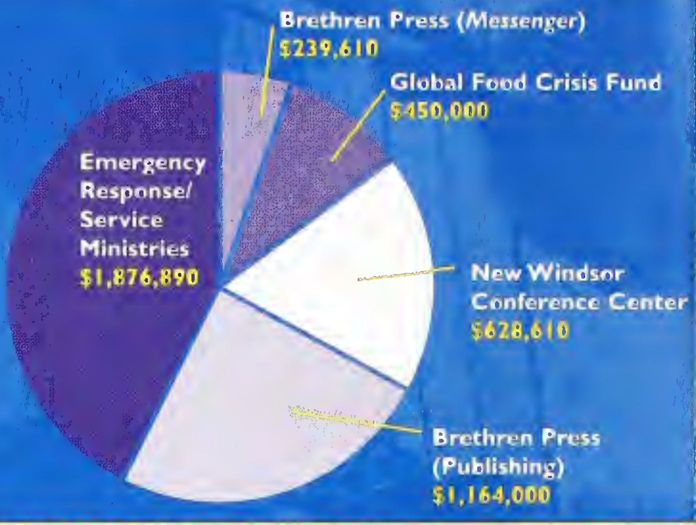
Brethren Witness. Enlists individuals and congregations in study and action on peace, justice, and environmental concerns. Manages Global Food Crisis Fund and Washington Office. $160,350

Congregational Life Ministries. Resources congregations in worship, spiritual growth, stewardship education, evangelism, urban and ethnic ministries. Directs youth/young adult work. $993,890

1999 General Board Program and Budget


Direct gifts from individuals
$400,000
Behold pledges
$125,000
Investments, endowments, other income
$756,000
Bequests (estate settlements)
$500,000
Congregational giving
$3,437,000

General Ministries Fund Income
Total $5,218,000



Additional Ministries Direct Income
Total $4,359,110

Funding. Offers financial resource counseling on stewardship and estate planning. Oversees direct mail campaign. Distributes outreach, stewardship, and offering emphasis packets. $517,730

Global Mission Partnerships. Guides international church planting, development, leadership training, theological education. Coordinates global relief, disaster, refugee, and material aid responses. $595,830

Ministry. Nurtures church leadership with Bethany Seminary and Brethren Academy. Sponsors ministry training. Works with district staff, pastors, and camps. Administers grants, pastoral assistance. $324,080

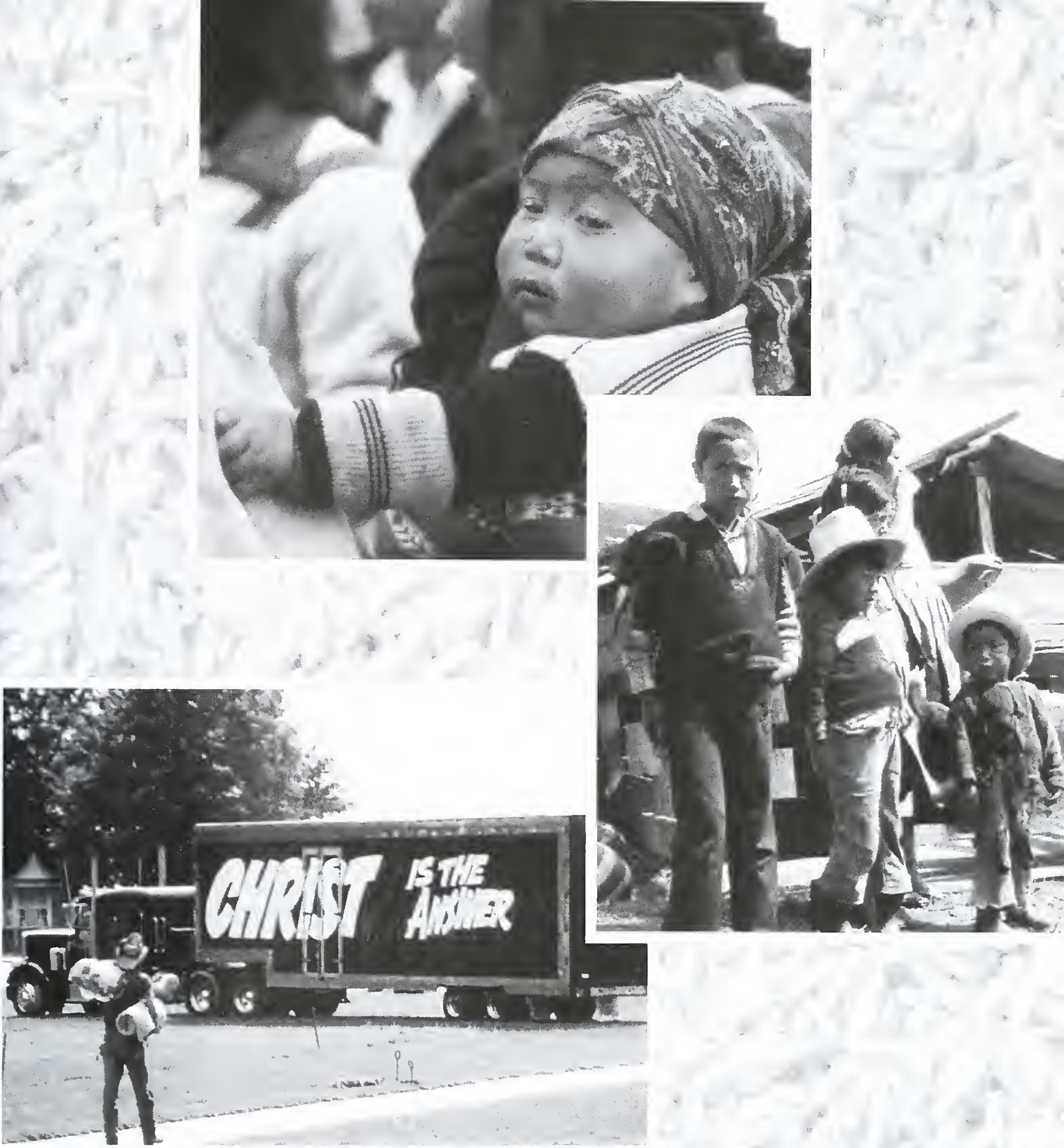
Treasurer/Centralized Resources. Handles finances of General Board and Annual Conference. Manages and maintains General Board facilities, technology, and archives. Covers telephone, technology, postage, support services for all program areas. $1,325,320

Volunteer Service Ministries. Conducts Brethren Volunteer Service training and placement in peace, justice, human need, and environmental projects. Oversees program volunteers. $351,340

General Ministries Fund Expenditures
$5,218,000

Total General Board Ministries $9,577,110

Church of the Brethren
General Board
1451 Dundee Avenue
Elgin, IL 60120


CHRIST IS THE ANSWER

It takes more than food

A Christian response is more about justice than charity

Story and photos by
David Radcliff

Nothing troubles us like hunger. Show a picture of a hungry child, and contributions pour in. Tell stories of families struggling to feed their children, and our hearts go out to them. See a whole people tottering on the brink of famine, and the world can mobilize to respond.

And hunger has always seemed like such a simple problem with straightforward solutions. Health care conjures images of highly trained doctors, expensive medicines, and an array of management plans. Poverty raises issues of gender, race, and tax codes. Mention "affirmative action" and people spring to their battle stations. Combating hunger has seemed more straightforward than dealing with other social problems.

Despite what we've thought, however, alleviating hunger isn't just a matter of providing enough food at the right time to the right people. Certainly getting food to people in need is crucial, and something that is a high priority for Christians. But unfortunately, we can't simply assume that once they get back on their feet, once the floods recede, once the latest round of fighting subsides, then things will return to normal and there will be food enough for all.

This just isn't how it works for the vast majority of the world's 850 million chronically hungry people. In places around the world that we usually associate with hunger—south Asia, Africa, Central America, the streets of many U.S. cities, and recently the country of Russia—the causes of hunger go deeper and resolution is more difficult to achieve.

Think about it. Most places of chronic hunger share one or more of the following characteristics. The government is corrupt, authoritarian or otherwise unresponsive to the needs of its people. There are deeply stratified racial, ethnic or caste divisions. Violence of one kind or another keeps people from having access to food or the social stability necessary to grow their own. Women are excluded from meaningful decision-making roles in the community

Profile in hunger
Sudan

Without peace, the hungry will not be fed. Nowhere is this more true than in Sudan, the largest and perhaps most troubled nation in Africa. At war for 27 of the past 37 years, by all accounts this east African country could be self-sufficient in food production if it were at peace. As it is, over 1.5 million people have perished in southern Sudan in the past decade alone—in an area populated by fewer than 10 million people. Millions more have fled their home areas—and farms and pastures—as refugees. Most of the dead are civilians, either caught directly in the fighting or, more likely, having been killed by the war's companions—starvation and disease. Many others suffer the ravages of malnutrition, including chronic illness and mental incapacitation.

Even relief efforts are caught up in the armed conflict, as contending sides decide whether to allow supplies to pass through areas they control. Meant as a balm, food becomes a weapon or reward, wielded by unscrupulous military and political leaders for their own advantage. When shipments are allowed, logistics are a nightmare, as roads are rugged or nonexistent.

Church of the Brethren relief efforts are coordinated through the New Sudan Council of Churches, longtime partner of the denomination. Aid is targeted to specific communities for particular projects. Grants from the General Board's Global Mission Partnerships office help sustain the ongoing work of the Council. The Global Food Crisis Fund has instigated a three-year $238,000 initiative called Sudan: Partnership for Peace. Each year's grant funds food relief for children, women's development efforts, adult education, and peace training for those working to stem conflict within and beyond tribal groups.

or nation. Wealth is concentrated in the hands of a small percentage of the population, with increasingly diminishing resources available to those at the bottom of the economic ladder (a kind of "economic authoritarianism"). Little attention is given to important hunger-related issues like health care, education, and providing good employment opportunities. In other words, in one way or another human beings—especially those at the margins of their society—have little standing in the eyes of those in power.

North Korea fits here. So do Russia, many African nations where hunger is chronic, south Asia, and Central America. The problems of our own nation in feeding its people is found here too. In other words, feeding the hungry over the long haul—which means to address the problems that give rise to hunger—is more a question of justice than of charity. We can care for immediate needs by getting enough food to the right people, but helping people escape the *reach* of hunger is a more complicated endeavor.

Certainly the most vulnerable members of society, the old and the young or those ostracized by race, class or gender, will often need immediate assistance. It is appropriate—indeed imperative—to find effective ways to meet their needs until longer term help arrives in the form of basic changes in society.

While reaching out our hands to offer aid, however, we must simultaneously raise our voices with theirs to challenge the conditions that do not allow people to have the respect they need or standing they deserve to have adequate food. As Mary McCann of the American Friends Service Committee wrote from Honduras recently, "Indifference to the suffering caused by Mitch is unthinkable; indifference to the

Profile in hunger

California

HUNGER PROGRAM
SOVA

Forrest Holdcraft graduated from the University of California at Berkeley in 1969. He is articulate and thoughtful, and once owned his own construction business. Now he sits outside the door of the West End food pantry in Ontario, Calif., waiting for his ration of staples—a week's worth of food provided once every month.

He blames his circumstance on a nasty divorce that cost him his business and savings; doubtless there are other factors as well. He has been homeless for the past six years, and is just now getting his identity papers together to begin to reestablish himself. With luck, he will be able to find work and get off the streets. With better luck, and the assistance of programs like those of West End, he will find a job that pays more than the minimum wage of $5.75 an hour. Otherwise, he may still be hungry, as housing alone will likely consume 75 percent of his income, leaving little for food, much less niceties such as medical care or spare clothing.

"We are trying to give people hope, and to let them know that someone cares," said Jim Gilman, on the staff of the West End pantry. This pantry alone serves over 23,000 southern California clients each year, 50 percent of whom are children.

In January, the Global Food Crisis Fund provided a grant of $22,500 to the Pomona/Inland Valley Council of Churches to assist in food relief programs like the one at West End, all of which include a variety of services designed to move people beyond the need for food assistance.

Profile in hunger

North Korea

Tens of thousands of people fanned out across the mountains in a rural area of North Korea this fall. They weren't looking for valuable truffles or morel mushrooms, but for acorns to supplement their meager food supplies. Dirty and weary, the collectors spent the night sleeping on the ground on the mountain. Tomorrow meant another day of scavenging. Now in their fourth year of severe famine, North Koreans are getting good at foraging. They regularly add chopped cornstalks, grasses, and bark to their soup pot to give the illusion of a filling meal.

Experts say famines are rarely caused by natural disasters, not even the two summers of floods followed by a searing drought that North Korea experienced. Natural forces only magnify inadequacies already present in a society. For North Korea, their food problems are nearly a decade old, and can be traced back to the the breakup of the Soviet Union and the disappearance of subsidized commodities such as fuel oil, fertilizer, and machinery. There is also a pressing need for serious revisions in government agricultural policies.

"If we act together now," says Minneapolis-based agronomist Dr. Kim Joo, a frequent visitor to her former homeland and consultant to Church of the Brethren relief efforts, "we can find a way to turn this tragic situation around." Up to three million of North Korea's 23 million people have already perished from hunger-related causes.

The Church of the Brethren has sent an average of $150,000 annually in relief to North Korea since 1995, including rice, seed corn, barley seed, and canned beef donated by the Mid-Atlantic/Southern Pennsylvania Beef Canning Project. The Global Food Crisis Fund has just pledged $170,000 for 1999.

The funds will provide a $45,000 grant through Church World Service and Witness for grain and cooking oil; a 40-foot shipping container of a variety of seed potatoes with an extremely short growing season; 105 metric tons of barley seed (some of the harvested barley will be set aside to be used as seed for next year's crop, reducing dependence on outside suppliers); and later this summer 100 dairy goats with a milk yield four times that of domestic North Korean goats, which will be bred with domestic varieties to increase their production. Offspring will be passed on from one family to another instead of consigned to large collective dairies.

In these and other ways, donor organizations are encouraging subtle changes in overall farming practices.

njustices prior to Mitch must also be considered unacceptable" (*Peacework*, Dec. 98/Jan. 99).

That's why in every place where the Church of the Brethren is engaged in long-term efforts to ensure adequate food, we also work alongside those who seek resolution of the broader issues that affect hungry people. Debt relief in Central America. Accompaniment work in Guatemala. Support for peace initiatives in Sudan. Attempts to influence agricultural policies and farming patterns in North Korea. Paying special attention to the role of women in communities everywhere.

We have it on good authority that our God shares this broader perspective on caring for those in need. Certainly, biblical admonitions abound that call us to respond directly to others' need for nourishment. Old Testament passages tell harvesters not to clean the field or the orchard, but to leave something for those in need (Deut. 24:19ff). In Matthew 25, feeding the hungry is commensurate to giving food to Jesus himself. And the one miracle of Jesus recorded in all four Gospels is the multiplication of the loaves and fishes.

Just as prominent in the Scriptures, however, is attention to the structures that allow everyone in society to have a fair chance to make a decent life for themselves and their families. As early as Leviticus, the jubilee year restores property to its original owners, whether it has been acquired by others by their guile or their good business practices. As in other societies of the time, having land meant having food. Later on, the prophets condemn wealth accumulated by some at the expense of others, and stridently call for justice to prevail in economic relationships (Amos 2:6-7, 4:1). Micah 2 roundly condemns those who plot to take the property of others, and extends a call for special treatment for the women and children of the community.

Jesus was revolutionary in the course of his own ministry in elevat-

Profile in hunger

Guatemala

For the people of Guatemala, hunger is nothing new. Poor Guatemalans experience food shortages as a way of life. The primary cause is poverty—simply not having enough money or enough land to provide an adequate diet. The majority of wealth in Guatemala is held by a small percentage of the population, as is the best land. Consequently, many Guatemalans must attempt to survive by renting land to farm or by working for factories or large fincas—or farms—at the going wage of $2-3 per day.

Children are of necessity involved in the workforce, either in the fields or in the streets of the cities. Kept from school by their labors and by the inability of parents to pay even minimal school fees, these young ones will not receive the education that is so essential if they are ever to move beyond the situation of their parents. Racism is an issue too, as Guatemalans of Indian descent are the last to receive needed social services—or the respect that engenders self-confidence and hope for a better future.

Church of the Brethren programs support efforts to bring economic and political justice to Guatemala. The Global Food Crisis Fund is also working to address basic needs at the community level. A three-year $25,000 grant will assist people in one community in building water-storing cisterns and wood-conserving stoves in a project coordinated by Tom Benevento of the Global Mission Partnerships office.

ing those of little standing in the community to a place of recognition—so essential if their basic needs for health and well-being were to be respected. In befriending women and children, for example, he instantly instilled in them a sense of self-worth. At the same time, this reminded others that everyone is of utmost value in God's eyes.

Jesus condemned the inattention of religious leaders to matters of justice, even as they rigorously kept religious rituals (Luke 11:42). And in the only parable that names one of its characters, the rich man pays with his soul in the life-to-come for his inattention to the inequities experienced by poor Lazarus in the here-and-now.

Hunger is a stark reality in a world that regularly produces enough food to feed everyone. The role of Christians in such a world is twofold: to work to assure that every man, woman, and child has the opportunity to acquire the food they need to live healthy and productive lives, and to do what we can to make sure that the hungry are fed until that day of justice arrives.

The Church of the Brethren has had a special concern for hunger relief, and has given generously to feed the hungry. May we have this same concern for helping our neighbors escape the *reach* of hunger by striving for a time when every person has the same standing—and importance—in our eyes and in society as in the eyes of the creator.

Global Food Crisis Fund has a record year

The Global Food Crisis Fund, the principle Church of the Brethren response to world hunger, had a record year in 1998. A total of $456,619 was received—nearly twice the previous high, which was set the year before.

About 10 percent of the denomination's congregations participate in the My Two Cents Worth program; they contributed about half the total, with the remainder coming primarily from individual donors.

Sudan and North Korea received about 75 percent of grants given by the Fund in 1998, with other recipients being Honduras; Chiapas, Mexico; Russia; Mauritania; and Guatemala. Other than a five-percent administrative fee and a modest amount for education and interpretation (totaling about three percent), all donations to the Fund go directly to hunger relief.

A wide array of resources are available from the Brethren Witness office, which manages the Fund. These include a Children's Hunger Action Kit; Hunger for Justice Fast packet for youth; photo exhibits and slide presentations on Sudan and North Korea; and hunger education materials for all ages. —David Radcliff

David Radcliff, director of the Brethren Witness Office of the General Board staff, has traveled recently within the US and to North Korea, Sudan, and Guatemala to gather firsthand reports on hunger problems on behalf of the Church of the Brethren.

Brethrening

No such thing as a minor operation

The hernia was repaired and I have mended. However, "operation accomplished" did not happen without some fear and trepidation on my part. Before I entered my little cubicle in the surgical prep room, I was almost embarrassed to tell anyone I was having surgery. It all seemed so minor. Lying on that gurney, stripped of clothing, dignity, and freedom, I found my initial bravado evaporating. Answering questions about organ donations and living wills got the inner churning started. When the blood pressure dial soared to 189 over 115, I was about ready to grab my clothes and say, "I'm out of here! I'll live with the hernia!"

My operation early one Friday morning taught me that there is no such thing as minor surgery for the person who is experiencing it. In my moment of panic I wished that I had told my pastor about the surgery date. There I was alone, saying the twenty-third Psalm and petitioning God for strength to handle the ordeal.

My message for all of us who are facing uncertainties is a word of encouragement to reach out to others for support. We may not be as strong as we would like to pretend. Equally important, we may be far more precious than we ever dreamed. Of more value than all the birds, lilies, and grass piled together is how Jesus described us. Created in God's image, little lower than the angels—that's who we are. Of course we are worth a caregiver's time; the Bible tells us so.

So. . . when we hear advice from a caregiver who was reluctant to ask for pastoral care, let us do as he says, not as this one did. —William R. Kidwell

William R. Kidwell is interim campus pastor at Bethany Theological Seminary, Richmond, Ind. This is used with permission of The Journal of Pastoral Care.

Messenger would like to publish other short, colorful, humorous or poignant stories of real-life incidents involving Brethren. Please send your submission to Messenger, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120-1694 or e-mail to the editor at ffarrar_gb@brethren.org.

Mitch teaches economics

Hurricanes don't kill people. Poverty kills people.

BY SUE WAGNER FIELDS

The children of Mulukuku *are the victims of a crushing national debt.*

The economic dynamics of our world have been changing very rapidly — so rapidly that people who care can hardly keep track of what is happening. Discerning how we may be called by the God of justice to respond requires that great attention be given to these issues. Christians who truly care about being faithful to God's call to reach out to the hungry, the sick, the naked, and the imprisoned, would do well to devote serious effort to the study of economics, including global economics.

We live in a world in which the economic system that most of us support and benefit from plays a large and growing role in causing the hunger, sickness, poverty, and violence that we work so hard to alleviate with our generous service and disaster response programs. This economic system, in which the gap between rich and poor continues to widen, and by which our earth is being destroyed, also has a lot to do with causing the desperation and hopelessness that breed the violence that our peacemaking efforts confront. This system is not only contributing to the cause of the problems, but is undermining our efforts to respond.

Because of my convictions in this area, when my last pastoral commitment ended three years ago, I decided to focus my ministry skills on further educating myself and others about global economics and its effects upon the billions of desperately poor and vulnerable people in our world.

Early last year, with the support of the Little Swatara congregation of Bethel, Pa., and the Atlantic Northeast District Peace and Justice Committee who cosponsored the project, I began planning to lead a delegation of people to Nicaragua to focus upon one aspect of global economics — the unpayable national debts of the 40 or so "highly indebted nations" of the world, including Nicaragua's.

Jay Good

Compassion means not only getting dirty *but also doing battle with global economic injustices. In Nicaragua, Damon Wagner Fields, left, and Jim Eby did both.*

According to UNICEF, six million children die each year in Latin America, Asia, and Africa due to policies that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank impose on highly indebted nations. The crushing burdens of national debts are not simply economic issues. They are moral, life-and-death issues.

Our trip was planned for this past fall. The 11 delegation members and most of our funds came from six congregations, all but one in our district. We were to spend most of our time in Mulukuku, a remote village in the center of the country, where the Maria Luisa Ortiz Women's Center would host us.

But Hurricane Mitch got to Central America before we got there, dumping rain on vast areas of the country for five days, ending about a week before our departure date of Nov. 10. Dorothy Granada, our contact in Nicaragua, told us of thousands of dead and missing, scores of washed-out bridges, mudslides, lost harvests, entire communities isolated, buried, or washed away completely.

At first we wondered whether to cancel the delegation. But within a few days, we realized that we were better prepared to respond immediately than others might have been, having already gotten our immunizations, and airline tickets.

So we began making the necessary changes in our plans to adapt the delegation to include a response to the present crisis. By the time we left, delegation members had in hand over $28,000 of relief aid, about half of which was from the General Board's Emergency Response/Service Ministries office in New Windsor, Md., and the rest from our congregations.

We did not want to lose the original focus of our trip, so we went ahead with the first two days of the trip more or less as planned, meeting with representatives of various organizations working in Nicaragua. These dedicated individuals articulated for us how present global economic trends and institutions, especially the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, which control the terms of Nicaragua's debts, were affecting Nicaraguans in negative ways.

Hurricane Mitch was a good teacher of economics, bringing into more clear focus the dynamics that we had planned to study. As we heard over and over, it was not a hurricane but poverty that killed people and destroyed fragile ecological areas.

It is difficult to engage in conversations with people here in the US about these topics. It doesn't take long for eyes to glaze over and for the subject of conversation to change. Most people around us seem to assume that economic systems and policies at work in the world are far out there somewhere, and are of serious concern only for bankers, professional economists, and the like. But one after another, the people who spoke with our delegation helped us to see that global economic policies, while made by people in powerful nations far away from Nicaragua, have effects that are anything but remote in their daily lives.

Large percentages of Nicaraguan people experience daily the crushing burden of an unpayable debt and economic policies that benefit rich over poor. Largely because of such policies, their children do not go to school, have no clean water, eat only half the recommended calories, and die from easily preventable illnesses.

Cirilo Otero, director of a civil society advocacy group told us, "Hurricane Mitch stripped Nicaragua naked before the eyes of the world."

The storm revealed just how vulnerable were the lives of millions of rural farmers who had already lived on the edge of survival for years. During the last eight years of "structural adjustment programs" (SAP's) imposed by the World Bank and IMF, thousands of small farmers had been forced to sell their land. SAP's are the means by which these institutions attempt to insure that nations continue to pay interest on their debts even before attending to the most basic needs of their citizens.

These campesinos joined thousands of other desperately poor folks who had nowhere to live and raise food but on the steep slopes of deforested volcanoes and mountains, or in flood zones. A representative of a coalition of nongovernmental organizations in Nicaragua said, "It was not so much that the rivers rose to flood the houses, but that the houses were already in the rivers."

As we traveled through the countryside, we saw campesinos cultivating high up on slopes that peared to be too steep even for alking, slopes that had been deforsted either by the greed of huge ansnational corporations, or by the overty of campesinos needing fuel r grass for cattle. It was slopes such s these that had given way and were arried by the torrential rains down ver the roads, burying whole vilges, people, and fields.

We passed field after field where our river told us there had been acres and cres of basic rains or vegetales. Nothing emained but fields f rocks and gravel. he topsoil had een buried or ashed out to sea. hese campesinos aised 70 percent of icaragua's food, ut it is difficult to e how these fields ould ever be cultiated again. The ense of finality I lt while viewing ese fields was a eeling not unlike eath — death of e land.

The eight-year eriod of SAP's as not only forced any off their land, but has crippled e nation's infrastructure to espond even to the needs of normal fe, much less to the present catatrophe. When Mitch came, Cirilo old us, there was little medicine in he country, and the government was n the process of dismissing half of he nation's public health doctors, elling them to "go and sell your serices." (SAP's push for this type of rivatization of public services). It is ne thing for doctors to sell their ervices in a nation with low unemloyment. It is quite another to rivatize the services of doctors in a ation with over 50 percent unemloyment and underemployment.

Nicaraguans received no warning f the coming storm from their govrnment. Warning citizens quickly vould have been extremely difficult, s vast areas of the country have no electricity. Heavy equipment that was desperately needed to clear avalanches and rebuild bridges was in short supply, and we saw brigades of men attempting to do this work with shovels and wheelbarrows. Diseases such as cholera, which were spreading quickly after water was contaminated, are much more likely to be fatal if victims are already malnourished, which so many Nicaraguans are.

Dave Bradley

Avalanches on deforested *hillsides covered once-fertile fields with rock.*

I was enormously appreciative of the members of our delegation because each was willing to work under rather unpredictable circumstances. We were also fortunate to have dedicated and resourceful contacts in Nicaragua through whom to work. Many waterways on the road to Mulukuku were still impassable by vehicle when we arrived in the country, so we arranged to work for a few days each with CEPAD (the Council of Evangelical Churches of Nicaragua), Centro Humbolt (an environmental center), and Misión Cristiana (a denomination of Nicaraguan churches with whom Brethren have related as sister churches in recent years). We were delighted to represent Brethren by giving thousands of dollars each to a group of indigenous people whose village had washed away, a town that had not yet received any aid, Misión Cristiana, and a bean seed project in Mulukuku, where we managed to go before the end of our trip.

Our group found it meaningful to be involved in these relief efforts. But even after millions of dollars of relief aid are given, the poverty, hunger, and violence will be continuing realities unless Nicaragua's unjust economic and political structures are addressed. And natural disasters will continue to devastate nations such as this one, which have so few resources to defend themselves.

But how can ordinary people make a difference at such levels? In the course of preparing to lead this delegation, I learned about a growing international campaign called "Jubilee 2000," which has brought me much hope. The goal of the worldwide organization is to "cancel the crushing international debt of impoverished countries by the new millennium." Campaign leaders explain: "The principle of Jubilee first expressed in the Hebrew Scriptures declares the moral conviction that debts should be forgiven before people are driven to misery and hopelessness."

But why should the debts of some countries be forgiven? Jubilee 2000 explains further that the responsibility for national debts of highly indebted nations is shared widely. Some responsibility lies with the creditors who have often loaned for political reasons rather than according to sound economic principles.

It is enlightening to see how Nicaragua, for instance, incurred its debt. The debt began in the 1970s when US-supported dictator Anastasio Somoza made war against his own people. When he was forced from power in 1979 after years of civil war, he emptied the national treasury. The new government borrowed more money in the 1980s to rebuild the nation that was war-torn and broke. Funds were also needed to defend the nation against US-backed Contra forces.

It is important, too, to understand that the World Court in the Hague ruled against the US government in 1986 for causing $17 billion of damage during the war. The US refused to pay this debt, which is three times the size of Nicaragua's total national debt today. But Nicaragua is still expected to pay its debt.

No, these are not simple issues, but it is urgent that we start somewhere to understand and address them. Jubilee 2000 is a good place to start, both for education and for action. It is not that God loves the poor more than the rich. But it is only through God's grace enabling rich and poor to work together that the healing of us all will be found.

Sue Wagner Fields, of Bernville, Pa., is an ordained minister of the Church of the Brethren, working in areas of justice, peace, simple living, and family.

For more information

Jubilee 2000, 222 E. Capitol St., NE, Washington, DC 20003-1036
Phone: 202-783-3566 Website: www.j2000usa.org

Witness for Peace, 1229 15th St., NW, Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202-588-1471 Website: http://www.witnessforpeace.org

Books to read:

- *Dark Victory: United States, Structural Adjustment and Global Poverty*, by Bello Walden.
- *Fifty Years is Enough: The Case Against the World Bank and IMF*, by Kevin Danaher.
- *The Debt Boomerang: How Third World Debt Harms Us All*, by Susan George.
- *Faith and Credit: The World Bank's Secular Empire*, by Susan George.

To purchase coffee that will help small Nicaraguan coffee farmers rebuild their lives in the wake of hurricane Mitch, contact:
Equal Exchange, 251 Revere St., Canton, MA 02021
Phone: 617-830-0303 Website: www.equalexchange.com

Many of the small farmers who grow coffee for Equal Exchange in Nicaragua live and farm in the northwestern part of the county, the area hardest hit by Mitch. These farmers lost family members, homes, trees, processing plants, and more. You can support them and Equal Exchange's efforts to help these farmers pick up the pieces of their lives by purchasing Equal Exchange coffee, especially their Nicaraguan blends, either directly from the company, or from SERRV.

Brethrening

Family ties

I've been a special education teacher for 15 years, mostly working with emotionally handicapped children. Although I've grown as a teacher, I've never been happy with the way I handle conflict between students. My usual pattern is to strengthen the ignoring skills of the "victim" and punish the bully, adding a message that it isn't nice to be mean. This approach is minimally successful, as one might imagine.

Returning to my EH classroom this year, I was determined to handle conflict more effectively, but had no idea how to accomplish it. On the day I was to receive a new student, I became aware that there had been conflict between this student and one who was already in my class; in fact, the two of them had had a fistfight in the cafeteria that day. Feeling a bit panicked, I wracked my brain, struggling to find the technique, the approach, the ANYTHING that would resolve the clash that was about to take place between two large, aggressive 12-year-old boys.

All afternoon I stewed over this and could not find a single thing in my head that would help the situation. In desperation, with 10 minutes to go, I prayed: "Lord, I don't have a clue how to handle this. I don't just want to stop the conflict, I want to change their whole thinking. Can you help me?" The answer I received was so bizarre, I couldn't believe I'd heard correctly.

The bell rang, the new student came in, the tension in my classroom surged. I asked the new boy to sit at the table with me, and I said to my class, "Let's talk about something. I know that you two boys have had fights before. Many of us are nervous that it will happen again. But it won't happen, not in here. In here, we are family. In here, we take care of each other. This is your safe place. Outside that door, kids will pick on you, make fun of you, call you names. But when you come through this door, into this room, you are returning to your family. We support each other. This is a peaceful place, and we are all safe here."

The tension melted away. I could feel it ebbing as I spoke, which gave me more courage to say the words that at first felt awkward. I called each student's name, asking for a commitment to our "family," and received it. There was a handshake between the two boys who had fought before. And then we got on with our work. There is a remarkable absence of conflict in my classroom, and there have been no other fights in the cafeteria or anywhere else.

Someday, maybe, I can help my students see that we are ALL family.

—Marsha Banicki Graham, Beacon Heights Church of the Brethren, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Messenger would like to publish other short, colorful, humorous or poignant stories of real-life incidents involving Brethren. Please send your submission to Messenger, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120-1694 or e-mail to the editor at ffarrar_gb@brethren.org

Anger—give it to God

God can take it

By Frank Ramirez

Psalm 137

By the rivers of Babylon— there we at down and there we wept when we emembered Zion.

On the willows there we hung up our arps.

For there our captors asked us for ongs, and our tormentors asked for mirth, saying, "Sing us one of the ongs of Zion!"

How could we sing the Lord's song in foreign land?

If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither!

Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth, if I do not remember you, if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy.

Remember, O Lord, against the Edomites the day of Jerusalem's fall, how they said, "Tear it down! Tear it down! Down to its foundations!"

O daughter Babylon, you devastator! Happy shall they be who pay you back what you have done to us!

Happy shall they be who take your little ones and dash them against the rock!

I admit this is not in the least bit rational, but the truth is the truth. I feel tremendous anger every time I catch a replay of Bobby Thompson's home run in 1951. You know, the ninth inning home run that helped the New York Giants defeat the Brooklyn Dodgers in a playoff for the National League pennant.

It doesn't much make sense. After all, I wasn't even around when this event took place. I grew up a fan of the Los Angeles Dodgers. It doesn't matter. I get furious when people bring it up as one of sport's greatest moments (it wasn't of course, because it involved the Giants).

Why, I find myself wondering, couldn't the team bus have caught fire and everyone died? Why did the Giants have to win? I don't mean any of it. But I think it.

When you come down to it, I even like various members of the Giants legacy, such as manager Dusty Baker and one-time pitcher Juan Marichal. But I *hate* the Giants and I have to admit that to myself and realize that's irrational, especially since they didn't loot and pillage my people and take them away to a distant land.

Brethren sometimes don't like to admit they hate people, but God's people in other times have no such compunction.

Psalm 137 harks back to a bitter time in the history of God's people. After bad kings and allegiance to false gods, the people of the southern kingdom were conquered by the Babylonian Empire. It was a time of personal disaster and national catastrophe beyond comprehension to most Americans. It was also a period of extraordinary religious crisis. At the time it was assumed that battles on earth mirrored battles in heaven between the patron gods of the various nations. It seemed a fair assumption that the Hebrew God was roundly defeated by some Babylonian deity.

Everything was lost in that struggle. People died, often horribly. Others were enslaved. Conquered peoples endured horrific pains, physical and emotional. As they were led away into slavery, God's people realized they'd lost the land they'd been given by God. Nothing had any meaning.

The psalm records the distress of the people as they thought of all they had lost. They were being led to a place where a strange tongue would be spoken. Their tormentors mocked them, commanding that they sing a song about the land from which they were about to be wrenched. Certain that land and song, and perhaps even God, were all inextricably tied together, God's people hung up their harps on the willows of the homes they left behind, convinced they would never sing these songs again.

As it turned out, the people later discovered they could indeed sing the songs of Zion in a foreign land. They may have been defeated, but God endures no such defeat. They retained their identity, their language, and their religious customs. They endured, and eventually triumphed. Their exile lasted about as long as the reign of the commissars in the Soviet Union. Evil empires tend to self-destruct after a time, although to contemporaries they may seem eternal.

But they didn't know this at the time. Like dust bowl refugees, they might well have sung, "Ain't got a home in this world anymore." And in addition to their despair they felt a deep and harsh hatred toward their captors. Hatred that was expressed in a heartfelt desire that their captors someday feel the same terror and hopelessness God's people were feeling. Hatred so profound they blessed future generations of conquerors who might mercilessly destroy their captors' infants, in perhaps the same way they'd seen their own children slaughtered.

Typically when Psalm 137 pops up in the lexicon the final verses are not recited. That's reflected in *Hymnal* 148, "By The Waters," a delicate melody which reflects the poignant ache of the exiles, but leaves aside the expression of hatred. So does the haunting "By the Rivers" from the musical *Godspell*. *Hymnal* 134, "Babylon Streams Received Our Tears" gets closer to the mark, when in its final verse lyricist Calvin Seerveld writes: "God give you evil for reward. Bles'd be the one who brings your fall. Babylon great your seed be smashed! Vengeance shall come from God our Lord."

But most songs don't dare include the final verses of the psalm. Nor do most churches lift up the second half of the psalm in worship.

Most people quote only the beginning because it expresses one of the most desperate longings — the desire to get back to the golden age, the past that has been wrenched away. You can't get there from here.

Then the psalm degenerates into the gut-wrenching anger people feel as part of the normal process of grieving. Some people deny the anger part of their grief. I've seen widows who refuse to say anything about that no-good so-and-so who should have done better for them, or who refused to obey doctor's orders and could have lived longer, or simply died too soon and was loved so much. We're not comfortable with anger.

But it's there.

Deep down inside we believe there is something unchristian about a deep and heartfelt hatred. Especially for a folk who claims to be peaceable. I think those final verses of Psalm 137 accurately display the anger the people of God must have felt upon being wrenched from their homeland.

God doesn't have to act on the psalmist's anger, nor our own. God has his own agenda. But we owe it to God to express that deep anger or it will never be healed. It will work its way into our guts and poison our systems.

I remember in a Bible study on Jonah asking nice Brethren folks if they had ever felt such a rich and deep hate. Of course not, they answered. They liked to think they didn't hate anybody. But one by one they admitted it. One had just seen someone murdered in another country on TV, bludgeoned to death, and they were angry about it. They soon began to call to mind other examples of atrocities, such as wars of hunger and attrition in which infants were the first to die. Doesn't God want to hear about this anger from us? If we believe in a personal God, do we treat that God as a person?

The key is that the anger must be given to God. It is up to God to act. Retribution belongs to God.

People in other cultures express their deep anger, then don't think about it again. Perhaps you would be shocked to see people holler and scream and rant at each other, and then go out to dinner together. But they do. When you see people in the Middle East worked up into a frenzy about America as the great satan, yet hear reports of how well American tourists are treated in those same places, you know there is a difference between the deep and abiding hatred people can feel and their natural goodwill as they act.

Many Americans have not found themselves in the sort of situation well known in other countries where entire populations are displaced, and the innocent are slaughtered wholesale. We can hardly judge them if their anger ends in a call to God for retribution to their enemies.

The Psalms present in our conversation with God all the depth and breadth of human emotion. I love the Psalms because they are so blunt and honest, challenging even God in his heavens for not working fast enough or being as smart as us. I think Psalms should be the heart of worship because we're praying and crying and laughing and bleeding and living together.

When we pray the Psalms, and a psalm in its entirety, we stand with other believers, no matter how uncomfortable it makes us feel, in their anger as well as their joy, their grief as well as their exaltation. We acknowledge that God is a real God who accepts our emotions as authentically ours.

Frank Ramirez is pastor of Elkhart Valley Church of the Brethren, Elkhart, Ind.

Diversity issues need not be divisive but can be stimulating and progressive on all sides.

lessing of diversity

s a regular recipient of MESSENGER, have noticed many articles and leters dealing with the subject of iversity within the church. [See The blessing of diversity," an./Feb.] May I contribute another n a personal level?

My spouse and I share an interfaith arriage: both of us are active in the fe of our respective faith communies. Religion is the source of unity in ur relationship and is extended by oth of us to our daughter. We all upport each other in matters of the pirit and do our best to make sure at there is time available for our volvement in our religious commuities and their affairs.

There was a time when the church y wife was affiliated with had hanged pastors. With this change, e pastoral tolerance and accepance we, as a family, enjoyed at this hurch changed also. After many ears of affiliation with this church, y wife felt an urge to find another. Vith our interfaith marriage, where ould she go?

I had accompanied my wife while he "tried" several churches in our rea. It was the noticeable affection hat existed among family and conregational members of the akewood Church of the Brethren Millbury, Ohio) that caught both of ur interests. A short time later, my vife became a member.

I was pleased that she found a faith ommunity that she could call home. ince this time, my friendship with he pastor as well as the congregaional members has deepened. ecently, my parents (not members f any particular church and having o relation to Lakewood Church of he Brethren) passed away. Every indness was shown to me and my family in many forms—charitable donations in their honor, pastoral support, spiritual support by this congregation, and a funeral supper. All this was offered to me — a non-Christian.

I believe that this church has benefited by our family's involvement. My wife became active in their Women's Fellowship meetings, helping to organize funeral suppers, and assisting in children's education. While I am mindful that I cannot involve myself in the internal affairs of the congregation, it was at their invitation that I was able to help with various church projects. I have never at any time felt any attempt to proselytize me; and it would be rude of this guest to proselytize them. Some members go to great lengths to make sure that I do not feel insulted or belittled because of holiday events, fellowship events, or spiritual discussions.

Nonetheless, their concerns have become my concerns and my concerns, theirs. I feel accepted for who I am, welcomed, and respected by this truly loving membership.

We live in a world whose boundaries are shrinking; some of us fall in love and marry someone of another culture, ethnic background, or religion. This is what my wife and I did. We mutually agreed to not ask the other to convert as a condition of marriage. This, we thought, would preserve the spiritual identity of both of us. After 20 years of marriage, it seems to have worked and has strengthened our union.

Those of us in an interfaith marriage have unique needs — not the least of these are spiritual. Where could the spouses go to be inspired by the pastor . . . to be uplifted by the community of believers . . . to lend support to the work of God . . . and not be saddled with additional burdens like the need to convert? Lakewood Church of the Brethren has provided these to my wife and, yes, also to me.

I have found that many people of deep faith explore core issues not by finding information that agrees with their views but by seeking views that challenge their ideas. Even though the pastor is of a different faith than mine, I find from him new ideas and insights, new understandings of the Bible, and fascinating views on Christian history and current moral issues. Diversity issues need not be divisive but can be stimulating and progressive on all sides.

A church member asked me once if I was a member of the church. I told him that I was not but that my wife is. He then asked if I was a Christian. My reply? "Christian — no — believer in The Christ? —yes, most definitely. I am a follower of Baha-u-llah and member of the Baha'i Faith."

John Krochmalny
Walbridge, Ohio

CHECK OUT ARIZONA

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Sunday Services 10:30 AM

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111 N. Sun Valley Boulevard
Mesa, AZ 85207 (602) 985-8819
Sunday Services 10:15 AM

Phoenix First Church of the Brethren
3609 N. 27th Street
Phoenix, AZ 85016 (602) 955-8537
Sunday Services 10:45 AM

Tucson Church of the Brethren
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Tucson, AZ 85716 (520) 327-5106
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Wanted: Young adults of any age, married or single, to attend the 1999 Young Adult Conference, May 29-31 at Camp Woodland Altars in Peebles, Ohio. Keynote speaker will be David Radcliff, with musical leadership from Joesph Helfrich. Enjoy worship, workshops, recreation, and meeting new people. Come join us for a weekend of spiritual reflection and growth. Registration $80. For more information on how to register call the Youth and Young Adult Ministries Office at 800-323-8039

Come worship in the Valley of the Sun with Community Church of the Brethren at 111 N. Sunvalley Blvd., Mesa, AZ 86207. Mail to: 8343 E. Emelita Ave., Mesa, AZ 85208. Tel. (602) 357-9811.

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"Snow Birds" and all Florida visitors Come worship with us—a small, warm, family of Brethren. Venice Community Church of the Brethren, 2269 S. Tamiami Trail (U.S. 41), Venice, FL 34293 Phone:(941)497-7442.

Stay at the Hospitality House in St. Petersburg, Fla. — a week, two weeks, a month — any time of year. Everything furnished but your food. Sleeps 6 to 10 conveniently. Clergy or laity families welcome. Reasonable donation requested. Contact for details, cost, scheduling, and reservation form: First Church of the Brethren, 3651 71st Street North, St. Petersburg, FL 33710 — (727) 381-0709 —PnJLersch@juno.com. Come and let us enjoy your friendship!

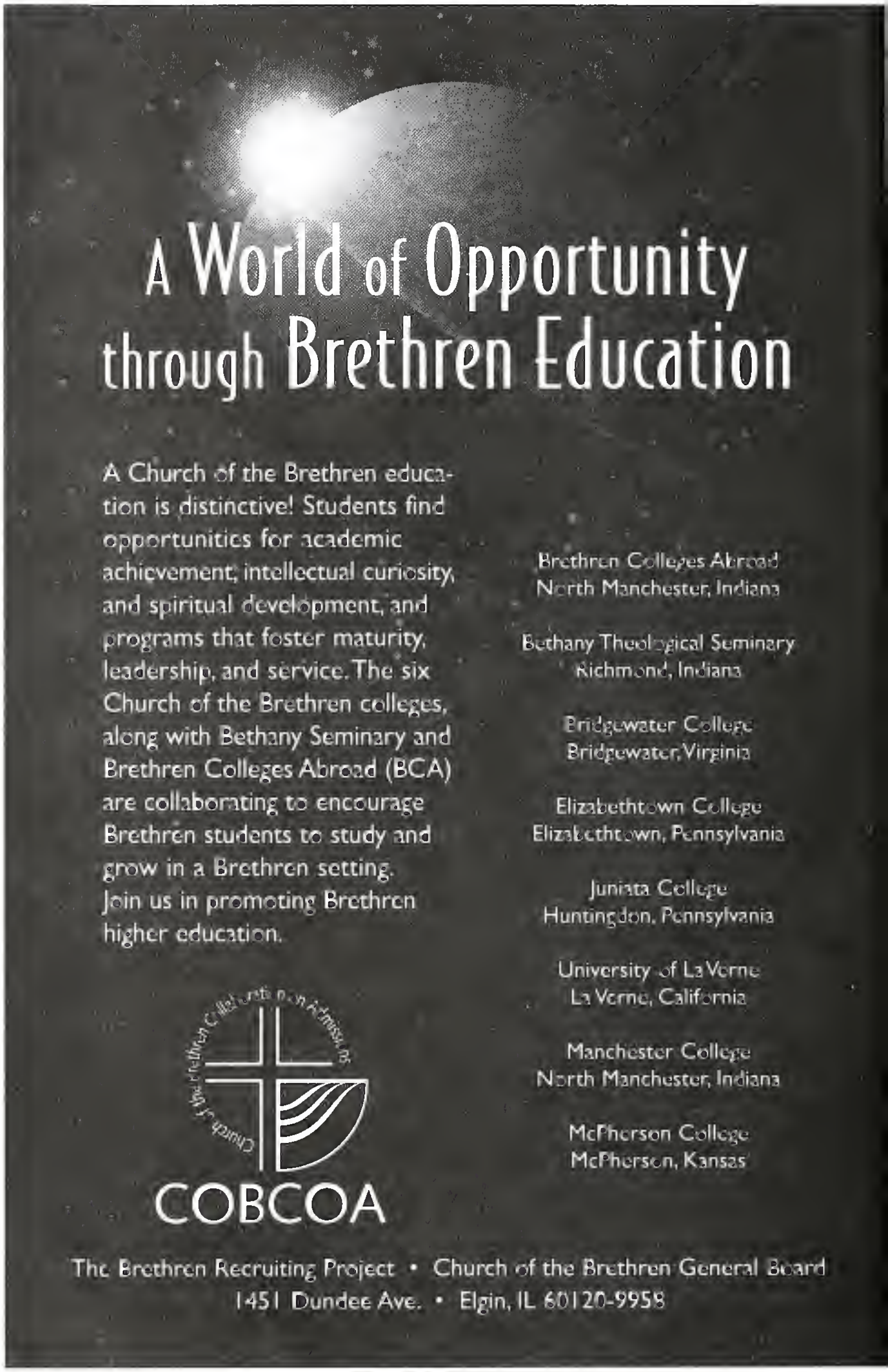
POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Program Field Staff. The Association of Brethren Caregivers is seeking a full-time program field staff to be responsible for coordinating the program of the Denominational Deacon Ministry and other ministries, possibly Family Life Ministry and Lafiya: A Whole-Person Health Ministry. This position, located in Elgin, Ill., will begin July 1 and fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Jay Gibble and June Gibble, who had shared this full-time position. Jay Gibble retired Jan.1; June Gibble will retire mid-year. The ideal candidate will exhibit the following qualifications and qualities: relevant experience; appreciation of the special ministry of deacons within the Church of the Brethren; enthusiasm for the mission and ministries of ABC; understanding of the Church of the Brethren heritage, theology and polity; bachelor's degree in a related field; high energy and motivation for excellence; proficiency in interpretation and consensus building; excellent communication, organization and computer skills. Some travel will be required. Send letter of application, resume and three references to Steve Mason, Executive Director, ABC, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120.

TRAVEL

Travel with a purpose: Joan and Wendell Bohrer present Spain, Portugal, and Morocco, Aug. 5-8, 1999. 15 days at $2,799, with all accommodations except lunch. Visit Lisbon, Madrid, Seville, Granada, and a great deal more. NOTE: There is room available on our Passion Play Tours for the year 2000. For information, write, tel/fax or e-mail rdwboh@strato.net. Tel/fax: 941-382-9371. After April 1: 5520 Royal Meadow Dr., Indianapolis, IN 46217, rdwboh@aol.com, Tel/fax 317-882-5067.

Travel to Annual Conference in Milwaukee, with visits to Wisconsin Dells, Chicago, the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan, and the Brethren offices in Elgin. For information please write to J. Kenneth Kreider, 1300 Sheaffer Road, Elizabethtown PA 17022.



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Turning Points

New Members

nkeny, Iowa: Melinda Moeckly

ntioch, Rocky Mount, Va.: Jonathan Emmons, Bradley Garst, Betty Rakes, Emily Webb

ush Creek, Monrovia, Md: Scot Hottel, Debra Keeney, Vernon Keeney, Lauren Weinberg, Jim Walker, Linda Walker, Allen Wilson, Amanda Elliott

upont, Ohio: Matt Angelstorf, Greg Scherer, Denise Scherer, Laura Young

khart City, Elkhart, Ind.: Walter Haroff, Imogene Rothermel, Karen and David Eis, Jill Noffsinger, Joseph Vance, Crystal Rogers, Trisha Hoke, Laurie Arnold

nglish River, South English, Iowa: Maegen Van Dee

phrata, Pa.: Donald Eisenberger, Krista Forehand, Stephanie Murr, Harry Nestorick, Bill Myers, Michael and Sarah Young, David and C.J. Koch, Desiree Cisney, Jacob Harley, Daniel Kulp, Kristin Miley

reensburg, Pa.: Eric Davis, Brenda Davis, Steve Ramer, Angela Faust, Amber Heminger, Kerri Holsopple, Kristen Waugh, Mark Romeo, Frank Wheeler, Amy Ramer

artville, Ohio: Christopher Bruner, Donna Bruner, James Houmard, Beatriz Houmard, Robert Riley, Carolyn Riley, Steve Mitchell, Kay Mitchell, David Mitchell, Mark Lonsway, Kim Lonsway, Glenn Kline, Ann Kline, John Lehner, Wendy Quartz, Shari Appel, Angie Schlabach

ooversville, Pa.: Aaron Weaver, Mildred Shaffer, Joseph Rosey III, Ruth Maggs, Willa Mae and Gary Weaver

ampeter, Pa.: Brian Sigman, Donna Sigman

iberty Mills, Ind.: Kris and Beverly Dierks

ogansport, Ind.: Rick and Missey Nelson, Brooke Campbell, Andrew Fox, Eli Graham, Troy Markley, Nila Markley, Stephen Osborn, Ron Roller, Karen Roller, Ben Spitler, Kim Willis

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idland, Va.: Ruth Dawson, Jeremy Smith, Gwen Stoltzfus, Ruby Stoltzfus, Violet Stoltzfus, Nathan Wolff

ohrsville, Pa.: Stephen Bealer, Heidi Felix, Christopher Kunkel, Tiffani Lakin, Elmer and Stephanie Lenz, Michael Meredith, Ted and Ann Stalnecker

anther Creek, Adel, Iowa: Chuck Zeimet, Carol Zeimet, Christopher Zeimet, Courtney Zeimet, Tom Barker, Leila Barker, Laura Barker, Jamie Heefner, Jess McCord, Nathan Fritz, Erin Hughes, Curt Hunt, Amanda Marshall, Lorin Neuman-Lee, Shantelle Winters, Wendy Glenn, Verlan Miller, Barb Wright, John Wright

Paradise, Smithville, Ohio: Robert Armitage, Donna Armitage

Sugar Creek West, Lima, Ohio: Robert and Martha Stoner, Ruby Mihm

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Springfield, Coopersburg, Pa.: Ken and Dawn Michener, Keith and Donna Wolf, Bonnie Weaver, Sharon Weiner, David Weiner, Jr.

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White Oak, Penryn, Pa.: Jacob Martens, Bonnie Martens, Wayne Esh, Justin Lowe, Esther Brubaker, Josiah Brubaker, Tara Heisey, Nancy S. Horst, Amy Martens, Carla Martens, Juliana Wantz, Brittanie Wenger

Whitestone, Tonasket, Wash.: William Bedient, Sarah Bedient

Wedding Anniversaries

Barkdoll, Edwin and Helen, Waynesboro, Pa., 65

Buirley, Cliff and Sarah, Troy, Ohio, 55

Dessenberg, Courtland and Eileen, Ashland, Ohio, 60

Jones, Vern and Bonnie, Avon Park, Fla., 50

Miller, Kenny and Erma, Elkhart, Ind., 50

Wampler, B.J. and Mary Virginia, Harrisonburg, Va., 55

Deaths

Adams, James, 83, Hagerstown, Md., Jan. 15, 1998

Bahn, Violet, 97, Dallastown, Pa., Jan. 2

Baker, Harold, 72, Mt. Morris, Ill., Dec. 18

Bechtold, Mary Alice, 92, Mt. Morris, Ill., Dec. 26

Benedict, Edith Ella, 84, Vermontville, Mich., Nov. 25

Bennetch, Sallie, 97, Ephrata, Pa., Oct. 19

Brandenburg, Ernest, 79, Hagerstown, Md., July 22

Brubaker, Lucy, 96, Hardy, Va., Nov. 18

Cauffiel, D. Edward, 91, Davidsville, Pa., Nov. 20

Cline, Sarah, 97, Salida, Colo., Oct. 8

Coblentz, Margaret, 75, Mt. Morris, Ill., Oct. 3

Couch, Altha E., 101, Raytown, Mo., Dec. 26

Crouse, Edith, 78, Adel, Iowa, Dec. 4

Crumley, Janet, 55, Fort Wayne, Ind., Dec. 21

Davis, Nellie Mae, 73, Adel, Iowa, Dec. 6

Deeter, Delores, 92, Troy, Ohio, Feb. 5

Deffenbaugh, Patricia, Friedens, Pa., Nov. 20

Deibert, Beulah, 96, Hagerstown, Md., Nov. 13

Delauter, Roy "Les," Frederick, Md., Oct. 23

Devereaux, David, 57, Tonasket, Wash., Dec. 14

Deyerle, Lois, Salem, Va., 87, Dec. 30

Eaton, John B., 86, Harrisonburg, Va., Jan. 13

Erb, Kathryn, 83, Ephrata, Pa., Jan. 9

Eyler, Helen, 82, Boonsboro, Md., Jan. 23, 1998

Fahnestock, Esther, 88, Ephrata, Pa., Jan. 17

Ferm, Dora, 90, Elkhart, Ind., Oct. 19

Ferry, Cora Mae, 77, Martinsburg, Pa., Dec. 16

Flory, Ronald, 83, Rockford, Ill., Dec. 26

Folck, Ada, 85, Troy, Ohio, March 11

Frey, Esther B., 88, New Oxford, Pa., Jan. 11

Fultz, Nora M., 85, Ashland, Ohio, Nov. 20

Gannon, Rosella M., 79, Ashland, Ohio, Nov. 20

Gerberich, Joseph, 101, Hagerstown, Md., July 13

Goehnauer, Etta Mae, 66, Orrville, Ohio, Dec. 23

Hess, Dorothy M., 89, Harrisonburg, Va., Dec. 16

Hess, Merl, 66, Roaring Spring, Pa., Dec. 11

Hill, Harriet, 74, Hagerstown, Md., Dec. 25

Hochstetler, Laura, 91, W. Salem, Ohio, Dec. 13

Hoffman, Robert, 74, Hagerstown, Md., Jan. 7, 1998

Hoover, Esther B., 94, Hanover, Pa., Dec. 8

Jennings, Katherine, 108, Clear Spring, Md., March 11, 1998

Johnson, Virginia, 78, Hagerstown, Md., Oct. 21

Kelly, Delbert, 88, McPherson, Kan., Dec. 1

Kimmel, Luella, Friedens, Pa., July 28

Knupp, William, 60, Johnstown, Pa., July 7

Kuhn, Lonnie, 55, Oakland, Md., Jan. 2

Landes, Ralph, 92, Kansas City, Kan., Nov. 16

Lightner, Nellie, 80, Troy, Ohio, March 27

Linde, Elmer L., 79, Ankeny, Iowa, Nov. 14

LoCastro, Frank J., 65, Altoona, Iowa, Nov. 20

Love, Mary, 84, Latrobe, Pa., April 25

Lyons, John, Somerset, Pa., Feb. 13, 1998

Masterson, O. Ray, 69, Brownsville, Tex., Sept. 9

Mayner, Wilma R., 81, Higbee, Mo., Nov. 8

McCann, Kenneth Sr., 74, Greensburg, Pa., July 10

McWilliams, Vertie M., 93, New Oxford, Pa., Dec. 22

Messamer, Fern, 93, Adel, Iowa, July 24

Miller, Eula R., 95, Harrisonburg, Va., Dec. 11

Miller, Virginia M., 89, Harrisonburg, Va., Dec. 21

Moomaw, Ethel, 89, La Verne, Calif., Nov. 21

Moomaw, Jennie, 96, La Verne, Calif., Dec. 9

Myers, Kenneth L., 89, Goshen, Ind., Jan. 12

Norwood, Jean, 72, Kokomo, Ind., Sept. 27

Oberholzer, Wilmer, 77, Hagerstown, Md., Jan. 17, 1998

Peffer, Betty Jane, 65, Waynesboro, Pa., Dec. 21

Poole, Herman, Frederick, Md., Nov. 12

Poole, Luretta, 88, Boonsboro, Md., Feb. 25, 1998

Potter, Dorothy, 59, Johnstown, Pa., Oct. 12

Reed, Don, 69, McPherson, Kan., Jan. 12

Rodgers, Pauline L., 63, Ashland, Ohio, Dec. 22

Roe, Thelma, 89, Hagerstown, Md., Nov. 11

Sano, Jerry, 38, Brooksville, Fla., April 22

Schweinsburg, Ruth, 77, Greensburg, Pa., May 20

Sherwood, Emma, 90, Troy, Ohio, Oct. 28

Souder, Ellen J., 106, Harleysville, Pa., Sept. 24

Spann, Joanne E., 71, N. Manchester, Ind., Dec. 26

Stine, Gladys, 94, Adel, Iowa, Feb. 14, 1998

Stine, Ira, 90, Adel, Iowa, Oct. 2

Suter, Evelyn, 89, North English, Iowa, Dec. 24

Tennis, Mabel E., 81, Dillsburg, Pa., Dec. 31

Thumm, Frances, 77, Hagerstown, Md., March 11, 1998

Togasaki, Yoshiko, 92, Berkeley, Calif., Dec. 20

Wright, Michael, 35, Roanoke, Va., Nov. 18

Pastoral Placements

Baker, Allen J., to Williamsburg, Pa., Jan. 11

Contra, Pete, to Oakland, Bradford, Ohio, Jan. 1

Deyerle, G. Ernest, to Red Hill, Roanoke, Va., Dec. 15

Hagenberger, Gene M., from Roaring Spring, Pa., to Peach Blossom, Easton, Md., June 14

Kunselman, Dorothy, to Plumcreek, Shelocta, Pa., part-time, May 1

Oltman, Berwyn, to New Covenant, Gotha, Fla., October

Page, Ron, from James Creek, Marklesburg, Pa., to Albright, Roaring Spring, Pa., March 15

Raley, David, to Terrace View, Forest, Va., Dec. 20

Rinehart, Joe, from Spindale, N.C., to Mill Creek, Tryon, N.C., Feb. 1

Sage, Glenn H., to Fairview, Floyd, Va., Oct. 18

Stroup, Donald, to Lakeview, Brethren, Mich.

Stump, Mildred, Elkhart, Ind.

Young, Sarah Leatherman, from Akron (Ohio) First, to Prince of Peace, Littleton, Colo., June 15

Licensings

Harvey, John, Aug. 16, La Verne, Calif.

Lease, Karen, Sept. 12, York Center, Lombard, Ill.

Longenecker, James E., Sept. 9, Arcadia, Fla.

Ordinations

Sauder, Steve, Nov. 14, Gortner Union, Oakland, Md.

Turley, Charles, May 15, Lowman Valley, Va.

Editorial

The last great superpower

It is a splendid thing to love one's country," said Pablo Casals, "but why must love stop at the border?" As Christians we know borders are artificial things and that God loves people on both sides equally. Yet if a devastating hurricane is moving up the Caribbean destroying everything in its path, the only concern voiced on our weather reports is whether it will hit Key West or Miami. The wrenching poverty in Tijuana or Port-au-Prince, only a few miles from US borders, is somehow not our poverty. Cuba, which ought to be a neighbor, is still behind an Iron Curtain in our minds.

The church has always been about the work of crossing borders. We have been raised on inspiring stories of courageous relief and development efforts, and reports of missionary evangelism. Those tales were all the more exciting because they came from faraway, mysterious lands. Now the world is shrinking. We are more aware than ever of worldwide connections in economics and ecology. Our incomes are rising, airfares are falling, the cold war is ending, and communication technology is improving. It is increasingly possible to go, in many ways, to the places we once only dreamed about. Globalization is the order of the day.

Ironically, however, our awareness still stops at the US border, and even Puerto Rico remains a "foreign" country to most of us. Our denomination, like many others, seems unsure of its role in the world. Painfully aware of past mistakes of arrogance, the desire to be correct has made churches hesitant and financially conservative about missions. At the same time, some factions of the church blast full speed into the world without humility, clinging to 19th-century models of converting heathens. There are better ways to be fully engaged, but staying home is no option.

> *It doesn't take long to learn that proclaiming the good news to others means hearing it proclaimed to us. We all need good news.*

The church's situation is mirrored in US foreign policy. Traumatized by arrogance and failure in Vietnam, the US is careful not to get "bogged down" in expensive unwinnable wars. Yet aware of its position as "the last great superpower," the US wants to play a moral and ethical role as peacemaker around the world. But that moral and ethical role is limited—there must be some selfish interest to justify US involvement in a place like Kosovo. "We can't get involved in every ethnic conflict as a police force without sooner or later getting overextended," says Henry Kissinger. "I think we need a national discussion about what we are trying to do." It is tempting to get into that discussion here, beginning with a suggestion that military intervention is an outmoded and inefficient tool for peacemaking.

But the church has its own "foreign policy" problems tha we should attend to first. Unlike a mere nation, we are given a Great Command to "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation" (Mark 16:15). We must not let debate about the meaning of "proclaim" stop us from hearing the word "go." We must go. Go study global economics. Go get on the internet to raise our awareness. Go read newspapers to learn what is going on in the world. And go get on airplanes to see for ourselves.

It is important, of course, to be culturally sensitive and politically informed when we go. Providing opportunities for global education is an important task of the church. But we need not have all th answers. When we get where we're going Jesus will give us further instructions. We must not be too fearful of doing missions wrong. Mistakes have been made, and there is room for discussion about whethe it is more important to feed a man's body or save his soul. But it is hard to genuinel try to spread the love of Jesus without doing both. We must go with the humility of a servant. Jesus is the last great superpower, not us.

The miracle of mission is that it will sav our own souls. Few have gone to a mission field without being changed by the experience. Conversion happens best away from home. When the poor of the world share their faith we listen better. When we arrive to find God has long been known where we had planned to introduce God, our faith is strengthened. When we see how much love we get from those we meant to give it to, we feel blessed. It doesn't take long to learn that proclaiming th good news to others means hearing it proclaimed to us. We all need good news.

After going into all the world we come home with our faith energized. Our stories energize our congregations. Borders begin to disappear, the world becomes a smaller place, and the church becomes a larger place. As it says in the Brethren Peace Fellowship newsletter, "A church without borders is one without limit!" It is time to get going. —FLETCHER FARRAR

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Body, Mind, Spirit

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Robert A. Raines

Former director of the Kirkridge Retreat and Study Center in Bangor, Pa., and author of 13 books including *A Time to Live*

Melva Wilson Costen

Helmar Emil Nielsen professor of Worship and Music, director of the program "African American Worship Traditions" and choral music director at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Ga.

Staccato Powell

Deputy General Secretary for National Ministries for the National Council of Churches in Christ.

John J. Shea

Advocate Healthcare Senior Scholar-in-Residence at the Park Ridge Center for the Study of Health, Faith and Ethics and a research professor at the Institute of Pastoral Studies, Loyola University of Chicago

Phillip C. Stone

President of Bridgewater (Va.) College

Ginny Thornburgh

Director of the Religion and Disability Program at the National Organization on Disability located in Washington, D.C.

Bible Study Leader — Barbara Lundblad

Preacher on "The Protestant Hour" radio program and other ecumenical events and associate professor of preaching at Union Theological Seminary.

Workshops

More than 60 workshops focusing on issues such as family and marriage relationships, death and dying, mediation and reconciliation, abuse and addictions, counseling, massage, parish nursing and more.

Post-Conference Seminar

Robert A. Raines will lead a one-day, post-conference seminar to explore ways for people to re-envision their lives and take action to make their lives more meaningful.

FOR CONFERENCE INFORMATION, CALL (800) 323-8039

Register by May 15 and save!

Last year was the worst year on record for humanitarian disasters

Last year Brethren contributed a record $456,210 to the Global Food Crisis Fund

These gifts . . . .

fed 50,000 North Koreans
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provided food for drought victims
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and a harsh winter

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water-storing cisterns

and helped thousands of Sudanese
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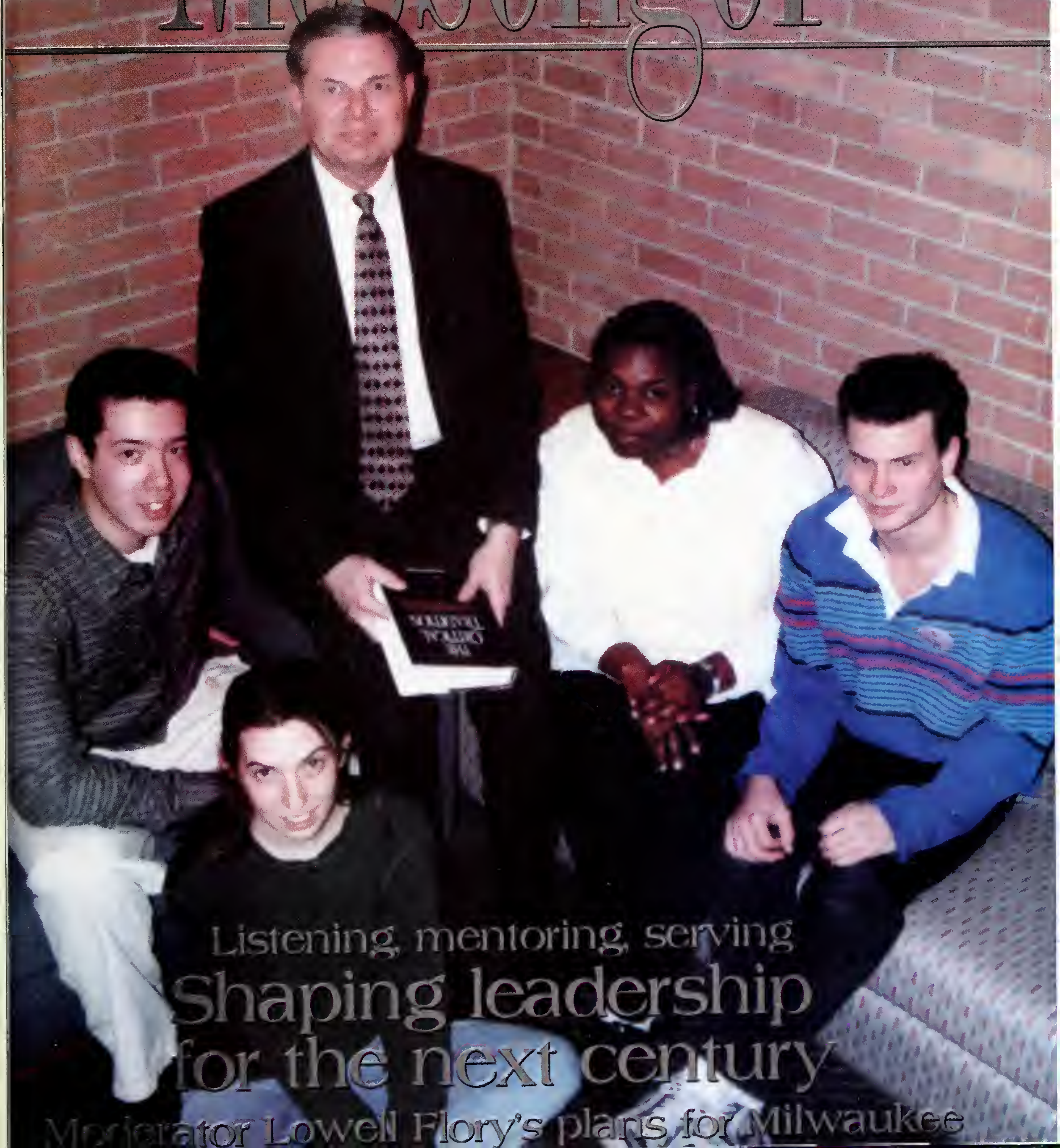
Messenger



Listening, mentoring, serving

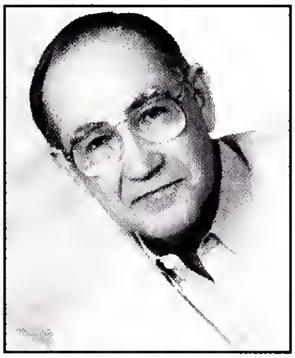
Shaping leadership for the next century

Moderator Lowell Flory's plans for Milwaukee

Seeds for growth

OPPORTUNITIES
TO HELP YOU
SOW SEEDS,
NURTURE GROWTH,
AND CULTIVATE
SPIRITUALITY IN
CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Congregational Life Ministries, Milwaukee Annual Conference



Writer, workshop leader, and church strategist William Easum will speak at Annual Conference on "The Context for Ministry in the 21st Century." This signature event, the Congregational Life Ministries Dinner, is at 5 p.m. on July 1.

You are invited to all Congregational Life Ministries programs. For meal events, order tickets through the Annual Conference Office.

Congregational Life Ministries
Church of the Brethren General Board

Congregational Life meal events

Outdoor Ministries Luncheon
Wednesday, June 30, 12 noon
Youth Peace Travel Team, recognitions

Multicultural Dinner
Wednesday, June 30, 5 p.m.
Ethnic Brethren groups lead celebration

Christian Education Luncheon
Thursday, July 1, 12 noon
Sonja Stewart, speaker

Congregational Life Ministries Dinner
Thursday, July 1, 5 p.m.
William Easum, speaker

Peanut Butter & Jelly Luncheon
Friday, July 2, 12:30 p.m.
Stewardship for preschoolers & caretakers

Early morning spiritual development

Stations of the Resurrection
Wednesday, June 30, 7 a.m.
Paul Grout, presenter

Taize Worship
Thursday, July 1, 7 a.m.
Becky Rhoades, Karen Carter, leaders

Labyrinth
Friday, July 2, 7 a.m.
David Smalley, leader

Spiritual Direction
Saturday, July 3, 7 a.m.
Glenn Mitchell, leader

Youth/Young Adult Insight Sessions

Youth and Spirituality
Wednesday, June 30, 9 p.m.
Chris Douglas, leader

Mentoring Programs for Youth
Thursday, July 1, 9 p.m.
Chris Douglas, leader

Teens and Smoking: What Can We Do?
Friday, July 2, 12:30 p.m.
Rhonda Pittman Gingrich, leader

CLT Insight Sessions

Breaking Down Racial Barriers
Wednesday, June 30, 12:30 p.m.
One congregation's story

Ethnic/Urban Consultation
Wednesday, June 30, 9 p.m.
Panel presentation

Sister Church Partnerships
Thursday, July 1, 12:30 p.m.
Logansport/Mexico/Roann story

Resources: What Congregations Want
Thursday, July 1, 12:30 p.m.
Wendy McFadden, PCPA survey

From Here to Where God Wants Us to Be
Thursday, July 1, 9 p.m.
William Easum, speaker

The Young Child Worships: Story Context
Thursday, July 1, 9 p.m.
Sonja Stewart, presenter

Congregational Life Teams Focus Group
Friday, July 2, 9 p.m.
David Smalley, stories, talk back

Understanding Rural Families
Friday, July 2, 9 p.m.
Roger Williams, presenter

Stewardship Education Exists
Friday, July 2, 9 p.m.
Dave Witkovsky, Ron Fleming

Becoming a Multicultural Church
Thursday, July 1, 9 p.m.
Panel on sharing worship space

The Voices of Worship
Thursday, July 1, 9 p.m.
Nancy Faus, Jonathan Shively

Principles of New Church Development
Friday, July 2, 12:30 p.m.
Glenn Timmons, coordinator

The Arts Address Racism
Friday, July 2, 9 p.m.
Jan Kensinger, drama

A Pocketful of ...
Friday, July 2, 9 p.m.
David Smalley on games and play

Handbells in Worship and Beyond
Friday, July 2, 9 p.m.
Janelle Flory, Kendra Flory

Messenger

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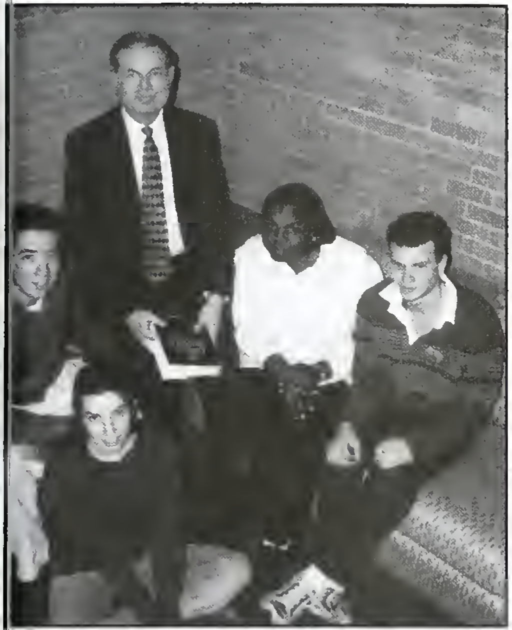

is Boyer

On the cover: Annual Conference moderator Lowell Flory in his role as professor at McPherson College, urges his students to be leaders in all aspects of their lives. The McPherson students pictured with Flory are, from left, Scott McDearmon, a sophomore from illedgeville, Ill., studying theater and business; Sarah tover, a junior majoring in English, from Quinter, Kan.; haRhonda ("Shay") Maclin, student council president, a unior majoring in elementary education, from Oklahoma ity, Okla.; and Seth Good, a sophomore majoring in biol- gy, from Annville, Pa. The cover photo and several of the hotos appearing with the article on page 10 are by Kris oyer, director of communications for McPherson College. oyer is a native of McPherson, Kan., a graduate of Friends niversity in Wichita, Kan., and is in her seventh year on the ollege's communications staff.

Wayne Zunkel

Departments

2 From the Publisher
3 In Touch
6 News
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31 Turning Points
32 Editorial

Features

10 Servant leader on leadership

Annual Conference moderator Lowell Flory will be bringing refreshing ideas on leadership to this year's Conference in Milwaukee. He also brings with him a background of many years of effective leadership in the Church of the Brethren.

14 Annual Conference preview

Turn here for a preview of the 213th Church of the Brethren Annual Conference—its business, candidates for election, speakers and programs, and a change-of-pace post-Conference opportunity, the Great Lakes Song & Story Fest.

17 Internet with a Brethren difference

When Michael Addison, manager of information systems for Brethren Benefit Trust, went looking for a way to speed up communication with BBT clients, he came across new technology that resulted in ClearViewNet, a "filtered" Internet service that will soon be offered to families concerned about Internet content.

20 Conference Dominican-style

It was an exciting and joyful time when La Iglesia de los Hermanos (the Church of the Brethren) met earlier this year for its 8th Annual Assembly in the Dominican Republic, joined by US church leaders and Wayne Zunkel, who reports on the gathering for MESSENGER.

22 Ethnic concerns and hopes

Howard Royer reports from the Ethnic/Urban Consultation of the Church of the Brethren in Kansas City in February.

24 The tenderness of God

Harold S. Martin, of York, Pa., writes from his study of the Bible, as well as much experience, that learning more about God's tender nature will lead us to be more kind and gentle ourselves.

From the Publisher

As is traditional in many Church of the Brethren congregations, at Highland Avenue we did baptisms on Palm Sunday. I was excited that four of the eight people we welcomed into membership were youth from the Sunday school class I help teach.

I don't pretend to claim any credit for the decisions of these young people. After all, I've been part of this particular class for just seven months. There have been a host of people providing the nurture that led to this point. There are parents and grandparents. A succession of earlier Sunday school teachers. Pastors. Camp counselors. Youth group advisors. Mentors. Friends.

Observing these baptisms led me to recall my own baptism—or baptisms, that is. Being an honest-to-goodness Anabaptist, I was baptized twice—once at age 4 (sort of a late "infant" baptism) and again at age 24. I remember both occasions. And I remember individuals in both congregations who made a contribution to my faith development.

These Holy Week baptisms also led me to remember a particular Easter several decades ago—sometime between that first baptism at age 4 and church membership around age 12—when I experienced something of an epiphany. I was sitting in the choir loft of my childhood congregation, a Presbyterian church of some 3,000 members, where Easter services are majestic and awe-inspiring. As the sunlight shot through the stained-glass windows, I was filled with a profound sense of the presence of God. The moment was not overly dramatic, but it was memorable. Through it came a transition from second-hand belief to an owned faith, a shift from head to heart.

There have been many transitions since, which is as it should be, and I hope that each development brings more maturity to my faith. I also hope that somewhere along the road I can be one of those who unknowingly makes a contribution to the growing faith of someone else.

I guess that's one of the reasons I keep going to Sunday school, alternating between participating as a class member and providing leadership as a teacher. Sunday school by itself isn't going to save anybody, but it can provide some of the good soil in which the Word of God can grow. "What matters isn't those who planted or watered, but God who made the plants grow" (1 Cor. 3:7 CEV).

Wendy McFadden

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Swaziland ambassador presents peace lecture

Moses Dlamini, Swaziland's ambassador to the United Nations, will deliver the Washington (D.C.) City Church of the Brethren's annual peace lectureship on April 25. Dlamini will present "The Role of a Christian in the Society in Times of Besiege," during morning worship. A question and answer session, along with a drama presented by the church's youth and the Swazi Dance-Sibhaca, is scheduled from 1:30 to 3 p.m. Contact Ruth Hoover at ruwahoov@juno.com or at 202-547-5924.

They say where there's a Wil there's another Wil

Wilbur and Wilford Hodges, members of the Monte Vista Church of the Brethren, Callaway, Va., celebrated their 86th birthday January 8 as they have every year—together. Wilbur's nickname is "Little Man" and Wilford is called "Big Man." They married sisters, Grace and Evelyn Wray, and have lived near each other since their wives both died. They spend most of their time together, taking walks, eating out, going to church, and visiting family. According to Karen Hodges Ziegler, Wilbur's granddaughter, "One is rarely seen without the other. The two of them are quite a pair!"

Wilford Hodges, *left, and Wilbur Hodges*

Pike Run to dedicate church built after fire

The dedication weekend for Pike Run Church of the Brethren, near Somerset, Pa., has been set for April 24-25. Pike Run's former church was destroyed in early 1998 due to arson. This new facility, which the congregation began using just prior to Thanksgiving, includes several classrooms and a social hall. Contact Lori Conn at lori@shol.com or at 724-593-4242.

Camp Harmony marks 75th year June 9-13

Camp Harmony of Hooversville, Pa., will celebrate its 75th anniversary June 9-13. June 9 will be used as a work day and on June 10 the men's and women's fellowships of Western Pa. District will be honored. An old-fashioned dinner in the lodge, the camp's last original building, will be held that evening. Youth will be honored June 11. Singing, worship, dining, and the construction of an outdoor chapel are scheduled for June 12, as is an old fashioned revival service. June 13 will include worship, lunch, and a sweethearts reunion for couples who met and later wed at the camp. Greetings from people who have related to the camp but cannot attend the celebration are encouraged. Contact Doloris Griffith at dolorisagriffith@compuserve.com or at 800-769-6559.

Pastor's Bible Study Award *winners at Spring Run Church of the Brethren.*

Monthly quiz makes Bible study more fun

The **Pastor's Bible Study Award** for January went to 36 persons at Spring Run Church of the Brethren, McVeytown, Pa. To qualify, they found at least 21 names, titles, or identifying descriptions of Jesus in the Gospel of John. Each month Pastor Jerry Miller challenges the congregation with a new Bible quiz. To request a copy of this month's challenge contact Miller at 717-899-7164 or jerrym550@aol.com.

Virginia church leader chairs school board

Barbara Smelser chairs the board of Leake's Chapel Church of the Brethren, near Stanley, Va. She is a deacon, teaches Vacation Bible School, and sings in the church choir. And now she has another position of leadership—as chairperson of the Page County (Va.) School Board.

A nine-year member of the school board, as chair she faces a county divided over whether to build one large high school or two smaller ones. She told the local newspaper, "We need to learn to work together as all of Page County, and not just two separate parts of the county."

Barbara Smelser

Remembered

Kenneth I. Morse, journalist, poet, hymnwriter, and for 35 years editor with the Church of the Brethren General Board, died on March 23. He was 85.

Beginning work with the denomination in 1943, Morse served seven years as youth editor, 21 years as MESSENGER editor, seven years as Brethren Press book editor, and eight years as a part-time volunteer, for a total of 43 years.

In 1988 he and his wife, Marjorie, moved from Elgin, Ill., to Timbercrest Home, North Manchester, Ind.

Among his cherished hymns are "Move in Our Midst," "For We Are Strangers No More," "Brothers and Sisters of Mine," and the translation of "Praise, I Will Praise You, Lord." An article about Morse will appear in next month's MESSENGER.

- **Geneva Kinzie,** 90, died March 4 in La Verne, Calif. memorial service was held March 12 at Ellisforde Church of the Brethren, Tonasket, Wash., where she was a longtime member. Her church involvements include being moderator of her church and her district. She was the first woman licensed to the ministry in the Church of the Brethren in Ohio.
- **H. Austin Cooper,** 87, longtime Church of the Brethren pastor and historian, died Jan. 22 in Frederick, Va. During his ministry he pastored 10 churches and authored three books of Brethren his

ry. For many years he
aired the Brethren his-
rical committee.

- **Howard H. Keim,** of
etamora, Ill., a Church
f the Brethren pastor for
ore than 72 years, died
an. 18. He was 93. He
as pastor of the Peoria
Ill.) Church of the
rethren from 1959-1970,
nd was co-founder of the
eoria Planned Parent-
ood Association. He
articipated in the 1963
arch on Washington with
r. Martin Luther King, Jr., and died on Martin Luther King Day.

- **Jack VonEhr,** 77, died March 13. A graduate of McPherson College, he was a key figure in the development of Boulder Hill, the largest unincorporated community in Illinois. He helped design and build Boulder Hill Neighborhood Church of the Brethren, Montgomery, Ill., where he and his wife, Nell, have been active since the congregation began.

asant View *Church of the Brethren, Fayetteville, W.Va.*

ctober homecoming lanned for centennial

ayetteville, W.Va., is observing its centennial in 1999. The
original meetinghouse was built just before the turn of the
tury as a second preaching point for the Chestnut Grove
rman Baptist Church, located near Oak Hill, W.Va. The
ucture burned in 1952, and the current brick meetinghouse
s built in 1953. Pleasant View invites all former pastors,
mbers, and friends for a homecoming weekend Oct. 1-3.
est speaker will be former pastor Walter Shank. For more
ormation see www. cob-net.org/church /pvcob.htm or call
4-574-2055.—Sam Riner

Dave Pitt, Ottumwa Courier

Iowa botanist *Ray Reeves researches prairie grasses.*

Botanist promotes prairie

Botanist **Ray Reeves** might have felt more at home 150 years ago, when prairies covered 85 percent of the Iowa landscape. But according to the *Ottumwa Courier*, now Reeves puts his heart into appreciating the small amount of prairie that remains. A member of English River Church of the Brethren, South English, Iowa, Reeves has recreated a small piece of prairie near his home in Harper, Iowa, and he cultivates native Iowa wildflowers and grasses to sell through his Reeves Wildflower Nursery. "The prairie is a living museum," he says.

"In Touch" profiles Brethren we would like you to meet. Send story ideas and photos to "In Touch," Messenger, *1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120.*

News

Nevin Dulabaum

Judy Mills Reimer, *executive director of the General Board staff, brought balloons to make the point there is much to celebrate.*

Board places spirituality and debt relief on its Y2K agenda

A comprehensive paper on ministerial leadership, a spiritual emphasis for the year 2000, support of the Jubilee 2000 campaign, and formation of a new church development advisory committee were key business items the Church of the Brethren General Board grappled with March 6-9, during meetings at the Church of the Brethren General Offices in Elgin, Ill.

The meetings were celebrative, reflective, worshipful, and deliberate in tone as the nearly 100 Board members and staff, district executives, and other guests celebrated some of the Board's successes, reflected on its ministries and new design, worshiped together at least once daily, and worked its way methodically through about 30 business items and reports.

Ministerial leadership paper

The General Board is forwarding a new ministerial leadership paper on to Annual Conference, the denomination's highest elected authority. This document is a comprehensive update that would replace the 1986 Annual Conference ministerial leadership paper. It would also supersed sections on licensing and ordination in related papers from 1975, 1976, 1977, and 1985.

The movement that led to the drafting of this new paper began in 1990 when Annual Conference appointed a study committee to look at ministerial leadership. Six years later the commit tee issued its report, listing 19 concerns, such as questions about defining ordination in new ways, developing consistent standards of ministry across all districts, assisting district ministry commissions, and making the distinction between those who are baptized and those called int inisterial leadership.

By March 1998, Allen Hansell, the eneral Board's director of ministry, ad assembled Brethren ministerial adership experts who began ddressing the concerns by drafting n entirely new document, which ncludes new areas on scripture, callng, records and reports, and nteraction between districts.

Having been reviewed at least wice by the Council of District xecutives and the General Board nd at least once by many other indiiduals and organizations, including hose who have read it off the Minstry office's Web page, this paper as been revised nearly 20 times.

Once revisions are finished, the raft approved by the Board will be osted at http://www.brethren.org/ enbd/ministry/paper.

piritual disciplines in 2000

A Year of Living Faithfully," a ramework of year 2000 initiatives hat Brethren will use to celebrate the 000th birthday of Christ by esponding "in faith, hope, and ove," was approved by the General oard. A task team of Board memers and staff, plus representatives rom the Council of District Execuives and Bethany Theological eminary, will meet over the next ew months to draw up specific lans.

Though details will be released at nnual Conference, some possibilities nclude disciplined Scripture study, rayer connections, congregations vitnessing to Jesus Christ's good news vithin their communities, Brethren eing challenged to reach beyond hemselves in mission and ministry, a heological conference, and the contruction of time capsules, which vould remain closed for the timespan f Jesus' earthly ministry.

"I think it is an appropriate time or people to think about who we are, vhat we are, and where we're going as people of faith," said David Radcliff, director of the Board's Brethren Witness office. "The Board needs to provide something, and I think Brethren will be receptive."

Nevin Dulabaum

General Board staff members *Judy Keyser, Dennis Kingery, and Dan McFadden participate in the spirit of worship that pervaded March General Board meetings.*

The project's task team includes Radcliff and a General Board staff member still to be named; Board members Don Booz, Ruth Davidson Clark, and Marie Willoughby; Joe Detrick, executive of Southern Pennsylvania District, and a still-to-be-named representative from Bethany Theological Seminary.

Debt forgiveness campaign

The Board joined other church agencies in endorsing the Jubilee 2000 campaign that seeks the forgiveness of debt that reportedly is strapping "Heavily Indebted Poor Countries," countries that in most cases have been affected by natural disasters and civil strife.

In Ethiopia, debt payments are four times greater than public spending on health; Nicaragua's debt repayment exceeds the nation's spending on social programs; Honduras' debt service costs more than $1 million each day.

"As we enter the new millennium and prepare to celebrate the 2000th birthday of Christ, it is appropriate that this be a time for a fresh start for those nations — and millions of people therein — who suffer under crushing international debt," reads the resolution the Board approved.

This document, which is endorsing the theory, not specific legislation, calls on Brethren members and congregations to join the debt cancellation campaign. Furthermore, the resolution urges "the United States government to cancel debt owed it by Heavily Indebted Poor Countries, particularly the countries of Nicaragua and Honduras, and to use its leadership to encourage the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank to implement similar debt cancellation."

The General Board's Washington

Office spearheaded this resolution. For more information, write washofc@aol.com or call 202-546-3202.

New church development

Though not much attention has been given in the area of new church development since the General Board's redesign in July 1997, that soon will change as the Board voted to create a new New Church Development Advisory Council. This council is expected to address new church development issues and concerns.

Six people from the General Board's five Congregational Life Team areas are being asked to serve on this committee. In addition, the Board is also inviting an American Baptist new church development expert to join the committee. Since 1972 the Church of the Brethren and American Baptists have maintained an association, sending a representative to each other's General Board meetings and assisting each other in other ways when needed.

Site committee

The General Board thanked and then dismissed its site committee, which was created to look at the feasibility and possibility of creating a single, central denominational center for Brethren agencies. In its report, the committee, which consisted of representatives from the General Board, Association of Brethren Caregivers, Brethren Benefit Trust, On Earth Peace Assembly, and SERRV International, stated that the Board first needs to examine the long-term future of its New Windsor, Md., operation, including the New Windsor Conference Center and the Board's Material Resources ministry. Only then can the Board make its best long-term site decision, the committee said.

The committee's members, many who represent their agencies on Annual Conference's Interagency Forum, believe that the IAF is the best table for this discussion to continue. They added that Annual Conference Standing Committee is the appropriate body to approach if action on a single, central denominational center were to be officially proposed.

Financial condition

Despite congregational giving declining by about $55,000 in 1998, the Board learned that its general fund books were closed with income over expense of $622,110. Factors that created this condition included $200,000 in underspending by the Board's ministries, plus income that exceeded projections in the categories of direct gifts, bequests, and investment and other income. The anticipated surplus was built into the Board's budget to help replenish its reserves used during its redesign, and to help maintain a five-year period void of additional budget reductions while being able to absorb rising expenses.

One new financial figure just released was the amount of money and goods the General Board gave to SERRV International as it became an independent nonprofit organization on Feb. 1. In addition to the $1,325,000 balance sheet total the Board "gifted" SERRV, this figure does not include about $13,000 in legal and professional fees; the cost of SERRV's 1998 audit, which the Board will pay; depreciated equipment and furnishings estimated at $50,000; and volunteer Board member and staff time to make the transition happen.

Board members were in a celebrative mood over the successful transition of SERRV, a ministry that was born with the Board and subsequently nurtured for nearly five decades. The opening session of business, on Saturday afternoon, was upbeat as the SERRV spinoff and two other special occasions were honored — the 1998 fiscal year and an anniversary of note for the Church of the Brethren General Offices.

In other business:

- The Board approved four recommendations for how it will evaluate its new design, which include evaluations with and by staff and the group of 100 pastors and 100 lay leaders that were contacted during the redesign process. An evaluation insight session is also scheduled during Annual Conference.
- Bethany Theological Seminary reported on a new initiative, the "Institute for Ministry with Youth and Young Adults," which is being established with the blessing of the General Board's Youth and Young Adult Ministry office.
- The Board heard a report that the management of its investment funds has been transferred to the Brethren Foundation from the Mennonite Foundation.
- The Board heard that its Mission and Ministries Planning Council is assessing whether to recommend that the General Board become a partner in Shalom Ministries in Tijuana, Mexico.

Church aids disaster victims in Africa, Central America

A $60,000 grant has been allocated from the General Board's Global Food Crisis Fund for food relief in Nicaragua in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch. The funds will be used to support food relief efforts of Misión Cristiana, the Church of the Brethren's partner organization in Nicaragua.

The Global Food Crisis Fund receives the majority of its funding from individual donations and the "My 2 Cents Worth" campaign, a national Brethren initiative that asks members to donate two cents for each meal they eat. In 1998 GFCF received $456,169 in contributions.

Seven grants from Emergency Disaster Fund totaling $103,360 were allocated in March:

- $20,000 in response to tornaloes that swept through Arkansas nd Tennessee in January; $5,000 is or Church World Service's response nd $15,000 is to fund an ER/SM roject in the Jackson, Tenn., area, vhere 2,500 homes were damaged or lestroyed.

- $10,000 for Grassroots Interna-ional's ongoing relief efforts in the Chiapas, Mexico, region. Conditions continue to deteriorate, while vio-ence and displacement are on the ise.
- $10,000 for CWS's response to ighting in Freetown, South Africa. Funds are needed for food, plastic sheeting, blankets, and clothing for lisplaced people.
- $2,360 for support of two grass-oots interfaith agencies that have been established following the Octo-ber 1998 flooding of the Guadalupe River.
- $15,000 for Church World Ser-vice's response to ongoing needs in Rwanda as a result of five years of strife. Funds are to help facilitate the construction of 150 homes and sup-port agricultural and community development.
- $16,000 in support of requests from Yvonne Dilling, Hurricane Mitch response coordinator in Cen-ral America for the Board's Global Mission Partnerships office. Misión Cristiana, the General Board's part-ner in Nicaragua, will receive $10,000 to support a food basket project for 480 families, in addition to its other food relief efforts funded by the Global Food Crisis Fund. The Honduran Mennonite Church will receive $6,000 for rebuilding houses for 12 mother-only families; the Church of the Brethren will sponsor four of the houses.
- $30,000 to support Church World Service's Hurricane Mitch relief and recovery efforts. Funds will support material aid shipments, vol-unteer work, medical teams, and the reconstruction of water systems, food programs, and agriculture.

Detrick and Dueck take on new positions in church

Mary Cline Detrick has been called as associate executive of Mid-Atlantic District, effective March 1. She is ordained in the Church of the Brethren and served on the General Board staff from 1974 to 1983. For the past 14 years she worked for Church Women United.

Stanley Dueck has accepted the call to the position of Congregational Life Team Member in Area 1. He will begin this new role on June 14. He has been the associate pastor at the Coventry Church of the Brethren since 1995 and will continue in that role. Stan and his wife, Julie Gordon-Dueck, live in Denver, Pa.

BVS unit completes training, workers head to assignments

Seventeen Brethren Volunteer Service workers completed their three-week orientation Feb. 5 as members of Orientation Unit 232. This group, which trained near Orlando at Camp Ithiel, included nine Brethren, four Germans, and five older adults.

The trainees participated in sessions dealing with farm worker issues, conflict resolution, AIDS awareness, racism, the death penalty, and nonviolent action. They spent two days picking fruit with farm workers, worked on a Habitat for Humanity project in Sebring, and made visits to Sebring Church of the Brethren, the Palms Estates of Highland County, and Eglise des Freres Haitiens, the Miami Haitian Church of the Brethren.

One of the older volunteers, Vercey Smith, a longtime Church of the Brethren member, begins her second tour in BVS. She also was in Unit 22. She and her husband, Allan, a Presbyterian minister, are headed for the World Friendship Center in Hiroshima, Japan.

Three of the new BVSers are headed to Germany, Northern Ireland, and Poland.

Gayle Hostetler

Participants in BVS Unit 232 were — *Bottom row: Jennifer Alwine, Jennifer Graber, Tracy Stoddart, and Matt Stauffer (staff). Middle row: Sue Grubb (staff), Sherri Ambrose, Vercey Smyth, Ingrid Miosga, Paul Chapman, Michelle Horner, and Lori List. Top row: Martin Lohnecke, Allan Smyth, Kate Elms, Aaron Richardson, Merlinde Seyberth, Michael Uhrig, Eric Thompson, and Sarah Koeman.*

The church needs servant leaders

Lowell Flory studies leadership, teaches it, embodies it. As moderator, he wants Annual Conference to explore the theme from all directions.

Kris Boyer

On the road again: *Lowell Flory, and his passenger, Mac the Moose, have crisscrossed the country.*

BY FLETCHER FARRAR

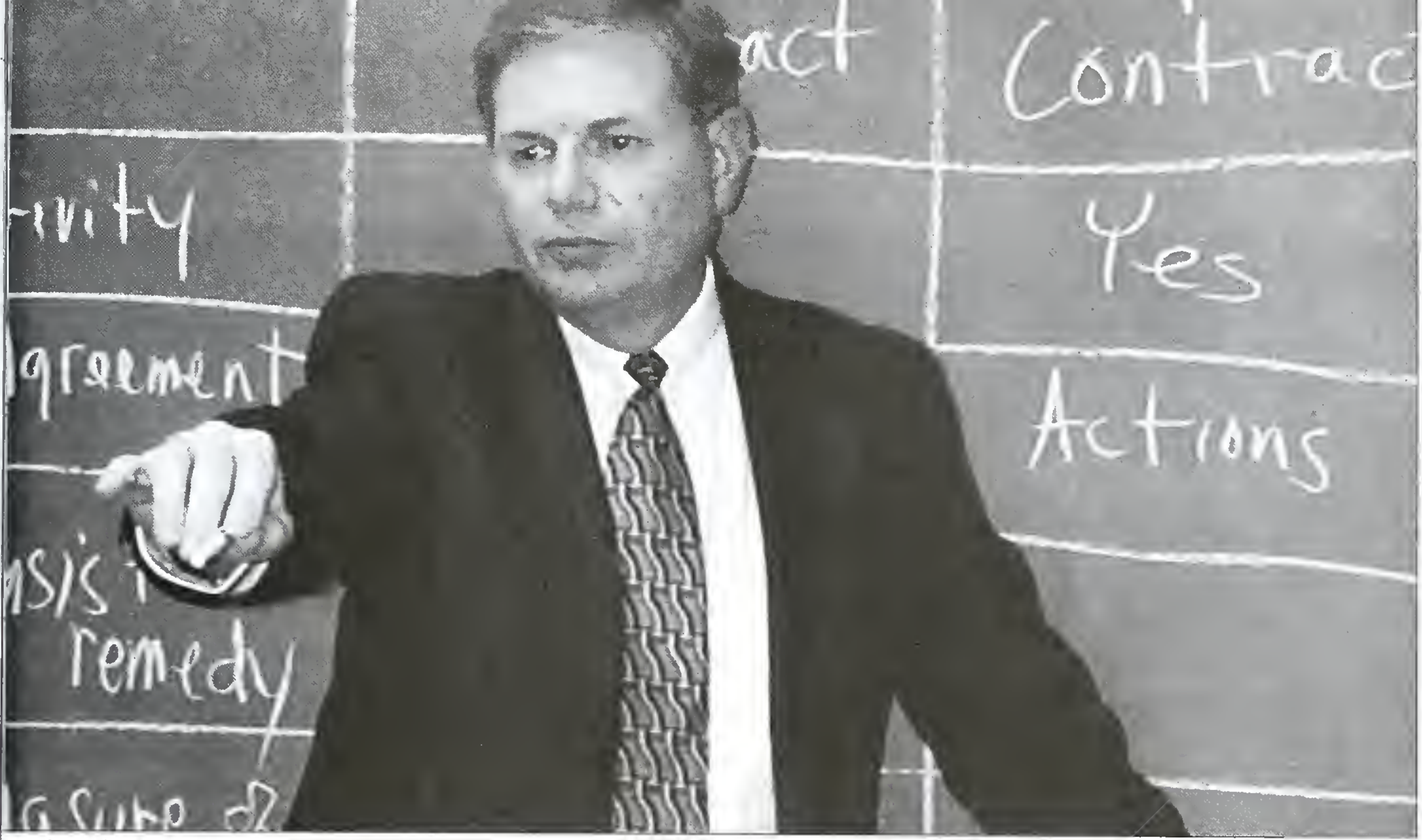
As a college professor, he teaches future leaders. As a churchman, he has been an effective leader through his work on numerous boards and committees. And now, as moderator of the Church of the Brethren, he hopes to involve Annual Conference in a stimulating discussion of leadership under the theme "Let the servant church arise!"

Lowell Flory lives and breathes leadership these days. The leadership he preaches in his many encounters with Brethren around the country is known as "servant leadership," taken from the example of Jesus who lowered himself to live and serve among people. Jesus led by washing feet.

"If the servanthood principle is understood well enough," Flory says, "then community will emerge from it." And once true community emerges, the church will move forward.

This theme will take shape in Milwaukee, Wis., at the 213th Annual Conference of the Church of the Brethren June 29-July 4. Flory has been preparing for the conference all year in meetings with the Program and Arrangements Committee and with Annual Conference officers. Conference worship services are planned around related themes, including the spiritual leadership of Christ, servanthood, community and reconciliation, and evangelism.

In the time since he became moderator in Orlando, Flory has traveled a phenomenal 60,000 miles as a roving ambassador for the church, visiting members of the denomination, inviting them to Conference, and listening



Teaching business law *at McPherson College.*

to their concerns. His travels have taken him to district events in 16 districts—including 12 district conferences and 11 district delegate briefings. He has spokento numerous congregations, appeared before pastors groups, and attended the National Older Adult Conference and National Youth Conference. He also has attended General Board and Interagency Forum meetings, and an ecumenical group called Council of Moderators and Secretaries. In February he visited the Dominican Republic, site of new denominational mission work.

What has he learned from all his travels? What is the state of the church? "There is a very good spirit, a very gentle spirit, and a uniform commitment to being Brethren," he told the General Board during its March meeting. "But the definition of being Brethren is divergent. There is a commitment to the church there, but it's like the blind people feeling the elephant. They don't come out with the same church that they're committed to. For the most part, I haven't seen any of those contradictions flare this year. But I think any of several issues on the floor of Conference would bring them back."

The moderator explained in an interview his plan to head off such a flareup. "My hope is that if this turns out to be a light year for business, we can use it as a year to build on some of the common threads, a year to talk about what we share in common," he says. "Then whenever those times come that we have to grapple with some tough issues, we have used years like this to build up some resiliency and some respect and trust for each other."

Flory's preparation for this Annual Conference has come not only during the past year but over a lifetime in the church and a career of the kind of leadership he extols. He was born in 1943 to Church of the Brethren parents and grew up in McPherson, Kan., where his father, Raymond Flory, was history professor at McPherson College.

After Lowell graduated from McPherson in 1965, he worked as a training coordinator at the University of Kansas Medical Center in Kansas City, where he had gone for "1-W" alternative service as a conscientious objector and ended up staying eight years. He did graduate work in history and received a master's degree in organizational communication from the University of Kansas in 1978. Then he went to University of Kansas law school in Lawrence, receiving his law degree in 1980.

He practiced law full time with his brother briefly, but in 1983 he was appointed to the faculty of McPherson, realizing the dream he had had since his undergraduate days of becoming a college professor. He is currently professor of business and economics and chair of the business and economics department.

He has been married for 32 years to Barbara Bollinger Flory, who grew up in the Olympic View church in Seattle. She has been a schoolteacher in McPherson, and this year became transition coordinator for the Head Start program in a two-county area around McPherson.

The Florys have four children. Their daughter Kristen Reynolds, 30, is an occupational therapist in McPherson. She and her husband, Brian Reynolds, have a two-year-old son, Daniel. Joel Flory, 27, works in computer animation in San Francisco, Calif. Kendra Flory, 21, is a junior at Bridgewater (Va.) College, studying communi-

Nevin Dulabaum

The Flory family, *Christmas 1998: Front row, from left, are Joel Flory, Daniel and Kristen Reynolds, Kendra Flory, and Brian Reynolds. Back row, from left, are Barbara, Janelle, and Lowell Flory. Inset: Janelle and Kendra Flory gave a memorable performance on handbells at the 1998 Annual Conference.*

cation and music. Janelle Flory, 19, is a freshman at McPherson College. Lowell Flory's parents, Raymond and Rowena Flory, also live in McPherson, where they continue to be active in church and community affairs.

Lowell Flory has prepared for leadership by studying history, communication, and law, and he teaches the subject often in his classes on business and economics. But his best education on leadership has come through service on boards, primarily in the Church of the Brethren. He has held local church offices in two different congregations in Kansas, and has served two or three terms on the Western Plains District board. He was a member of the General Board from 1981 to 1986, and during most of that time was chair of the Pension Board.

At the end of his General Board term, Flory was nominated for the board of Bethany Theological Seminary. At the time he didn't care whether he was elected or not, but to his surprise he was elected. The Bethany service "turned out to be one of the more growing experiences of my life," he says now. His two terms from 1986 to 1996 found the board "needing to navigate our way through some difficult internal cultural questions, as well as the issue of moving." Flory chaired the Bethany board through the last four years of his term, seeing the seminary through a successful move from Oak Brook, Ill., to Richmond, Ind.

Add to this Flory's service on the board of Brethren Benefit Trust from 1988 to 1995, serving as chair during much of that time, and 17 years on the board of Prairie View, Inc., a Mennonite mental health center in Kansas. Since 1980 Flory has served a total of 37 term-years, some simultaneously, on volunteer boards.

The servant leadership theme headlines a Conference that will be asked to approve a major paper on ministry, a topic that highlights the need for more pastors, with hundreds due to retire in the next 10 years. "We need to re-energize calling people to ministry," Flory says.

But church leadership is not just about pastors. "Lay leadership creates momentum in congregations. We have to spread this leadership around."

By spreading leadership around, he means to everybody. Flory wants to discard the notion that leaders are only the officeholders. No, in his view, a leader is anyone who helps to move the church along. "Leadership is a process of somehow getting a group to move toward an agreed goal," he says. "We all need to think of ourselves as helping with that process.

"This is the opposite of command and control. We become servants to each other. That is the essence of the way community functions."

Community is one of those shared values that Flory thinks all Brethren can agree on. Pursuing truth and resolving differences through community is what Annual Conference is all about.

"Brethren will agree on those kinds of things more readily than they will agree on biblical interpretation and christology. To say that we all believe in the lordship of Christ, that's easy.

I'd like for us to see how we put it into practice. How do we walk the talk? How do we live out being Brethren?"

As does any church leader these days, he worries about how various factions treat each other and whether they will get along. "Diversity has two sides," he reflects. "Diversity is enriching to a community. The other side of the coin is that in our diversity we must also seek our common threads. If we can't keep those shared beliefs, practices, and commitments, we're going to come unglued." Flory worries that unless there is mutual respect, new and "diverse" groups coming into the wider church may end up disregarding oldtimers the same way the newcomers had been mistreated before.

"The trouble is that there is an insufficient appreciation for stakeholders," he says. "I want to work toward a more intentional form of community that can lead us into reconciliation."

This business professor hopes even to make the business sessions less dreary and more enjoyable. "We can think of business as a form of linking together and linking to God," he says. "We seek out God's truth in community. Why can't we regard doing business as part of our worship?"

A good way to start building community is to get as many Brethren as possible to show up at Annual Conference in Milwaukee. Flory is planning a Conference full of celebration, storytelling, "worshipful" business, and worship.

And he will have these questions waiting for the delegates: "How can we respect each other in our diversity? How does each party maintain a sense of integrity? How do we find that common ground?"

Barbara Flory

In business sessions, *"we seek God's truth in community."* **Below** *At Lake Junaluska, N.C., Flory points to the future with Mac the Moose, the mascot who is expected to make an appearance at Annual Conference.*

Annual Conference
Business and ballots

There are three new and four unfinished business items to be considered during Annual Conference business sessions in Milwaukee.

New business will include a query on litigation, which comes from Western Plains District; a ministerial leadership statement from the General Board; and a proposal from Annual Conference Standing Committee that Standing Committee terms be lengthened.

Unfinished business items will include a statement on unfunded mandates. This paper was approved in theory by Annual Conference delegates in 1998, but was returned to Standing Committee for modification to include all of the official Annual Conference agencies, not just the General Board. Progress reports on the three other unfinished business items will be given — Caring for the Poor, Congregational Structure, and Review of the Process for Calling Denominational Leadership.

The 1999 Annual Conference Standing Committee ballot includes candidates for 13 positions. Standing Committee delegates will convene prior to Annual Conference and will reduce the number of nominees by half. The remaining nominees will be forwarded on to the Annual Conference delegates. The candidates are listed below.

Moderator-elect (two-year term): Phill Carlos Archbold, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Roger Forry, Somerset, Pa.; Steven Petcher, Citronelle, Ala.

Annual Conference Program & Arrangements Committee (three-year term): Marla Bieber Abe, Akron, Ohio; Debbie Eisenbise, Kalamazoo, Mich.; David Steele, Martinsburg, Pa.; Myrna Long Wheeler, San Dimas, Calif.

General Board, at-large (five-year term): Charles Eldredge, Lewistown, Pa.; Rhonda Jane Rich, Englewood, Ohio; Ricky Thomas, Mount Airy, N.C.; Roy Unruh, Cedar Falls, Iowa.

General Board, Northern Indiana (five-year term): Jill Bosler Best, Syracuse, Ind.; Donald Jordan, Fort Wayne, Ind.; Craig Alan Myers, Columbia City, Ind.; David Wysong, Fort Wayne, Ind.

General Board, Michigan (five-year term): Donald Flint, Sterling Heights, Mich.; Mary Gault, Battle Creek, Mich.; Daniel McRoberts, Caledonia, Mich.; Lori Waas Smith, Pinckney, Mich.

General Board, West Marva (five-year term): J. Melvin Fike, Moorefield, W.Va.; Hugh Friend, Friendsville, Md.; Sue Overman, Morgantown, W.Va.; Winoma Marguerite Spurgeon, Vienna, W.Va.

On Earth Peace Assembly (five-year term): Judy Dotterer, Woodsboro, Md.; Tom Leard Longenecker, Pasadena, Calif.; Laurie Miller, Harrisonburg, Va.; Ronald Stoner, Hanover, Pa.

Association of Brethren Caregivers (three-year term): Phil Flory (incumbent), Bridgewater, Va.; Margaret Yoder Fultz (incumbent), Lemoyne, Pa.; Heidi Loomis (incumbent), Boalsburg, Pa.; Mary Jane Myer, Cochranville, Pa.; Lona Beabes Norris, Huntingdon, Pa.; Janet Sell, Woodbury, Pa.; Donna Stanford, Waterford, Calif.; Paul Ullom-Minnich (incumbent), Moundridge, Kan.

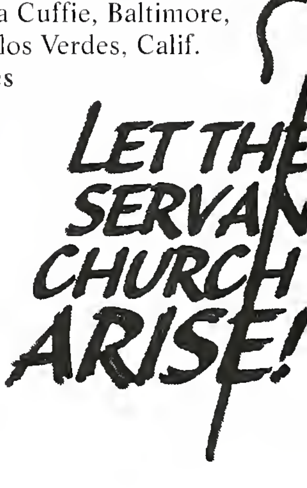
Brethren Benefit Trust (four-year term): Donald Anderson, Middlebury, Ind.; Karen Orpurt Crim, Dayton Ohio; Raymond Donadio Jr. (incumbent), Greenville, Ohio; Harry Rhodes, Roanoke, Va.

Bethany Theological Seminary elector, representing the colleges (five-year term): Sally Jane Conner, Bridgewater, Va.; Joan Engle, Alexandria, Pa.; Gene Fahs (incumbent), North Manchester, Ind.; Susan Taylor, McPherson, Kan.

Pastoral Compensation and Benefits Advisory Committee, district executives (five-year term): Ronald Beachly (incumbent), Davidsville, Pa.; Carol Bowers, Seattle, Wash.; Joe Detrick, Seven Valleys, Pa.; Craig Smith, Elizabethtown, Pa.

Committee on Interchurch Relations (three-year term): Mary Abraham, Lenexa, Kan.; Douglas Archer, New Paris, Ind.; Barbara Cuffie, Baltimore, Md.; Belita Mitchell, Rancho Palos Verdes, Calif.

National Council of Churches (four-year term): Gene Bucher, East Petersburg, Pa.; E.D. Hendricks, Eudora, Kan.; Ruthann Johansen, Granger, Ind.; David Miller, Richmond, Va.; Ronald Petry, North Manchester, Ind.; Valentina Satvedi, Vista, Calif.



The logo for the 1999 Annual Conference was created by Jan Gilbert Hurst of Westminster, Md.

Annual Conference Speakers and special events

Annual Conference is always a feast of information, inspiration, and entertainment, starting with pre-conference meetings. This year's pre-conference schedule includes two workshops on Tuesday, June 29—a "Servant Church" workshop by On Earth Peace Assembly, and a Matthew 18 workshop, by Ministry of Reconciliation. Three groups are combining to present a Clergy Financial Planning Seminar on Monday and Tuesday.

New to the Conference program this year are four early morning spiritual formation and development events, planned by Congregational Life Teams. They will be Wednesday through Saturday mornings from 7 to 8:30. Wednesday Paul Grout will lead a session on "Stations of the Resurrection," Thursday Becky Rhoades and Karen Carter will lead a session on Taizé worship, Friday David Smalley will lead a session on "labyrinth," and Saturday Glenn Mitchell will lead a session on spiritual direction.

Special speakers this year include William Easum, director of 21st Century Strategies and a consultant to congregations and religious organization. He will speak to the Thursday evening Congregational Life Ministries dinner on "The Context for Ministry in the 21st Century." Sonja M. Stewart, co-author of the book *Young Children and Worship*, speaks on "A Child's Spiritual Journey" at the Christian education luncheon July 1, and leads an insight session Thursday evening.

"Spinning the Web" is a presentation about the Church of the Brethren on the Internet, led by Nevin Dulabaum, administrator of the official denominational Web site, and Michael Addison, director of information services for Brethren Benefit Trust. The sessions are scheduled for Wednesday, June 30, and Thursday, July 1, both at 12:30 p.m.

New this year will be a break in a business session to explain and promote Conference 2000, to be held in Kansas City, Mo., on a new schedule. This will include a brief video, which will then be available for loan to congregations. Also new this year, Annual Conference will accept Visa and Mastercard cards for registration, meal tickets, age group activity fees, and Conference booklets.

The Saturday evening concert, July 3, features Kindling, a Brethren folk group of four musicians: Steve Kinzie, of La Verne, Calif.; Lee Krähenbühl, of Kalamazoo, Mich.; Peg Lehman, of Elgin, Ill., and Shawn Kirchner, of Chicago, Ill.

Nevin Dulabaum

The Milwaukee Arena *is the site of the Annual Conference worship services and business sessions. Formerly known as the Mecca Center, this building served as host of the 1990 Annual Conference.*

Nevin Dulabaum

The Hyatt Regency Hotel *is the official Annual Conference hotel. This will be host of some Conference events. It is located about two-thirds of a block away from the Milwaukee Arena, and about 2 blocks away from the main entrance of the Midwest Express Center.*

James Lehman

Jam session *at last year's Song & Story Fest. Clockwise from left foreground: Brenda Jolliff on guitar, Doug Eller on banjo, Joe Miguel on washboard, Bill Jolliff on fiddle.*

Songs and stories

Relax after Conference at the Great Lakes Song & Story Fest

BY JAMES H. LEHMAN

New things in the Church of the Brethren often start small, in a distant corner of the denomination. That's how the annual song and story fests began. They are the brainchild of Ken Kline Smeltzer, co-pastor of the Modesto, Calif., church, who was inspired by a conversation he had at the 1996 Cincinnati Annual Conference with some folk musicians who were complaining that there weren't enough outlets for Brethren performers.

Kline Smeltzer persuaded the board of Camp Peaceful Pines, in the Pacific Southwest District, to incorporate the idea into its June 1997 family camp. Brochures were sent out. An ad was placed in MESSENGER. Kline Smeltzer and the Peaceful Pines folks were borrowing the famous approach from Field of Dreams— "plan it and they will come." And they did—more than 140 people, many from the West coast, but some from as far east as Michigan, some on their way to Annual Conference in Long Beach, Calif.

Highlights of those six days were Jonathan Hunter's inner-city stories and the tales of his magical childhood cohort and guru, Tanaka; the uplifting music of Kindling; individual concerts by the members of Kindling—Steve Kinzie, Shawn Kirchner, Lee Krähenbühl, and Peg Lehman; the old-timey music of John and Jan Long and Bill and Brenda Jolliff; stories by Debbie Eisenbise and by Jim Lehman; daily workshops; morning worships; late night concerts in the biting air at 6,200 feet; kids running free; and impromptu storytelling and singing.

If one is a good beginning and two is a fortuitous repetition, three is a genuine movement. And so we have the third annual fest, called this year the Great Lakes Song & Story Fest, to be held July 4-9 at Camp Mack in Indiana right after Annual Conference in Milwaukee. People can leave Conference on Sunday, July 4, and arrive at Camp Mack by early evening.

Added to the line-up of storytellers and singers from earlier fests will be singer and songwriter Joseph Helfrich, storyteller Alan Hoal, the traveling peace quartet JOYA, the Bicentennial Plus One Players led by Frank Ramirez, and cellist David Frantz. Barb Sayler will serve as song leader for morning gatherings and campfires.

Each day will feature a morning worship followed by workshops on singing, songwriting, storytelling, drama, and dance. Afternoons will be free for family time, crafts, and jam sessions. Participants will gather in the early evening at the campfire for singing and for joke telling by the kids (a cherished fest tradition). After the youngest ones have gone to bed, there will be concerts, a play, or folk dances. People from surrounding churches who cannot attend for the whole week will be invited to drive in just for these featured evening events.

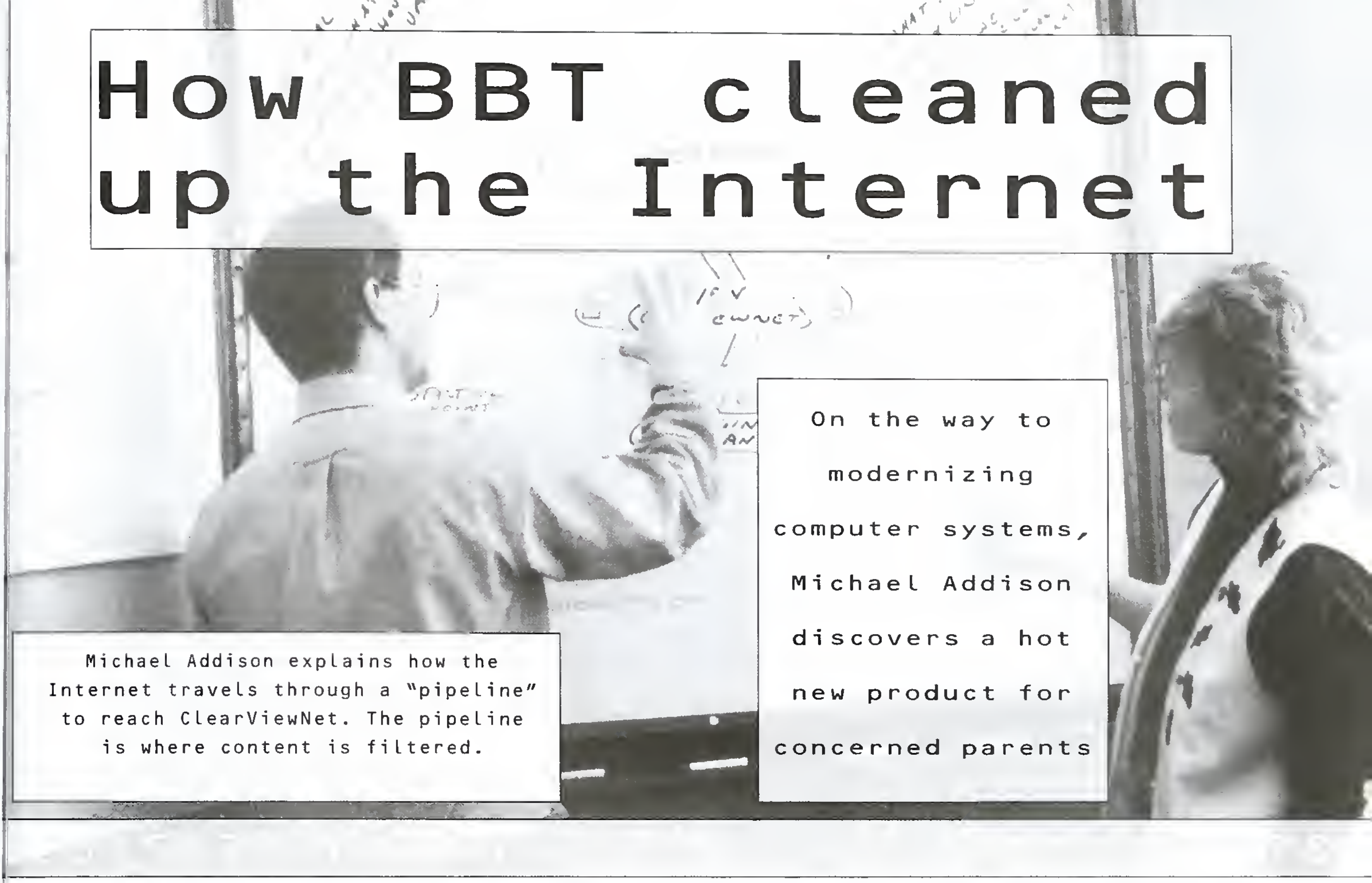
In addition, the varied resources of Camp Mack, located on Lake Waubee, will be available: swimming, sailing, canoeing, rowboating, snorkeling, hiking, climbing the rope course, Frisbee, golf, vollyball, ping pong, four-square, horseshoes, basketball, and croquet.

For information about registration, call Camp Mack at 219-658-4831. For information about the program, call Ken Kline Smeltzer at 209-522-7865 (home) or 209-523-1438 (church).

Jesus often chose to reveal the deepest spiritual realities by talking about something else. Instead of preaching a sermon he told a story. These song and story fests touch something deep in people while they are doing something else—singing and telling stories for pleasure. Often participants are stirred more deeply than in the direct approach of formal worship, preaching, and study. God gave us stories and songs to be enjoyed, and when people do this together at the song and story fests, God's creative spirit and love for humanity rises up and fills them. M.

James H. Lehman, of Elgin, Ill., is an occasional storyteller and gives counsel to Ken Kline Smeltzer, organizer of the Great Lakes Song & Story Fest.

How BBT cleaned up the Internet



Michael Addison explains how the Internet travels through a "pipeline" to reach ClearViewNet. The pipeline is where content is filtered.

On the way to modernizing computer systems, Michael Addison discovers a hot new product for concerned parents

By Fletcher Farrar

The Internet just became a simpler place for Brethren because of the new filtered Web access service offered by Brethren Benefit Trust. If you want the World Wide Web without the world wide trash that usually comes with it, you'll want to learn more about the product called ClearViewNet, which screens out undesirable content like nudity, pornography, violence, hate, gambling —and military recruiters— before they ever get into your computer.

But just as interesting as how filtering works —a company in Seattle actually employs three six-hour shifts of specialists who locate and block 1,000 new pages of pornography every day— is the process by which BBT found filtered Internet access as a byproduct on its way to offering expanded financial services to the Church of the Brethren. All this is part of BBT's "big picture." And Michael Addison is a big-picture kind of a guy.

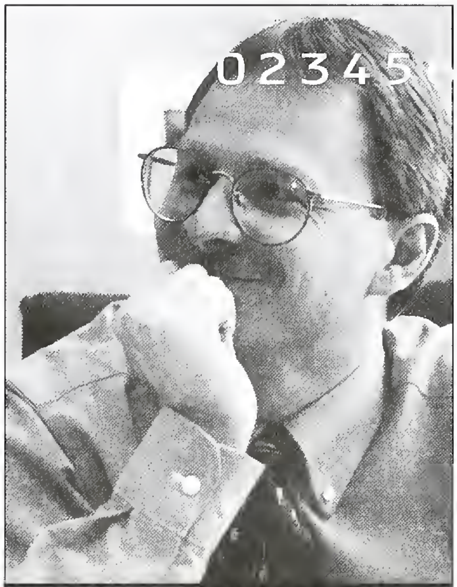
Michael Addison, 39, was an active member of First Church of the Brethren, Mansfield, Ohio, before his company transfered him to northern Illinois in 1996. He lives in Oswego, Ill., about 40 miles south of Elgin, with his wife, Donna, and their seven-year-old son, Nicholas. The Addisons now attend Boulder Hill Neighborhood Church of the Brethren, Montgomery, Ill.

After his experience in several high-powered positions in industry —he eventually became vice president of finance and information systems for General Signal Corporation— his company division was sold and he had become disillusioned with the corporate world. One Sunday at church a friend suggested he contact Brethren Benefit Trust for a position. He did.

Though he was uncertain about working for an arm of the church, he liked this agency with big plans. "What intrigued me was all their dreaming," he says. He was hired there as controller and director of information systems in February 1998, but after his computer savvy became better known he was named manager of information systems.

Addison sees his new position as a "call," and he works at computer technology in response to his faith. This faith connection was articulated best by his former pastor in Ohio, Clyde Fry, who sent Addison an e-mail message after agreeing to become the first client of ClearViewNet: "One of the hymns that we used at the end of many church meetings when I was a boy was 'Blest Be the Tie that Binds.' This product will bind us together in a new way, where we can share ideas, resources, and dialog with each other in seconds over great distances."

Addison has set about his goal of developing a "world-class information system infrastructure" for Brethren Benefit Trust. He tells the story of his plans by clicking through slides on the computer screen in his office. One shows a colorful pyramid with each layer labeled. "BBT wanted to build a pyramid of internal sys-



Michael Addison: "At ClearViewNet, we definitely feel like paradigm pioneers."

tems and tools," he explains. The aim was to provide quick financial information to clients of the pension system, and to church institutions that might hire BBT to help manage their finances. "The foundation software [at the bottom of the pyramid] needs to be done in 1999."

Click. Another slide. "We will focus on speed—getting things done as soon as possible. And we will focus on developing partner relations." Partner relations, he explained, means he would hire bigger computer companies to consult with him on how to accomplish his technology goals.

With the support of the BBT board, Addison has moved with astonishing speed over the past year to replace all the old computer equipment in the office with new, and to make sure everyone is using compatible software. "We had to try to quit patching everybody's pants." Now everybody has new pants.

Another slide. "We have to have an Internet interface." One of BBT's goals is to be hired by churches, districts, or other institutions to help manage their finances or watch over their endowments. To offer such services, the Internet would need to be the key communication link to providing clients direct access to financial information and reports.

As a first step, Addison provided Internet access to employes in the BBT office. But within a month he discovered a case of "inappropriate Internet use." Somebody in the BBT offices had logged onto something naughty. After reporting that incident to BBT management, Addison worked with a computer company named Concentric Networks of San Jose, Calif., to find a solution: a "virtual private network." This is an Internet service that gets to its users only after flowing through a "pipeline" from the larger Internet of cyberspace. Operators control what flows through that pipeline, thus allowing the content to be filtered. From this filtering capability, ClearViewNet was born.

ClearViewNet is described in promotional literature as "the first family-friendly Internet portal to apply a dynamic, continuously updated filter to both Web site access and search engine retrievals." The service also provides e-mail. It will be sold by a new for-profit company called eMountain Communications, formed specifically for this new venture after Annual Conference last year gave BBT the go-ahead to do so.

A Seattle company called N2H2 will be doing the actual filtering for BBT when ClearViewNet goes online sometime this spring. Its technology was developed for schools and libraries, and is used by the Mormon church. N2H2 monitors a database of more than eight million pages of Web content to screen for 30 different categories, including pornography, hate, profanity, gambling, and violence.

Exceptions or additions to the category list may be made by a filtering advisory committee of BBT board members—Ann Quay, of La Verne, Calif.; Ray Donadio, Jr., of Greenville, Ohio; Cheryl Ingold, of Merced, Calif.; and BBT president Wil Nolen. The committee has barred nudity, but has allowed exceptions for nudity with educational or medical content. And, for a Brethren twist, the committee has added military recruiters to the list of blocked sites.

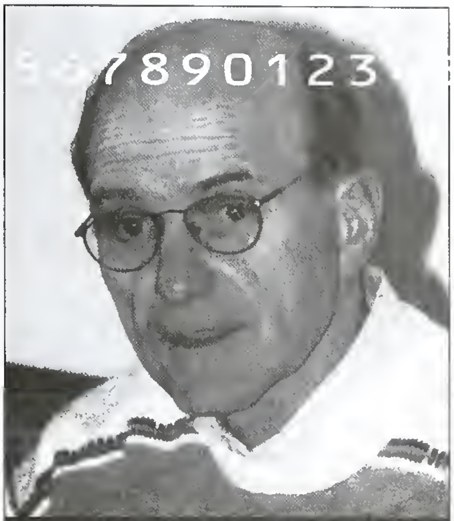
From a group of categories listed under "distractions," the committee has decided to allow most to go through, including games, news, jokes, and sports. But from that distractions list, the committee has blocked personal ads and swimsuits. ClearViewNet will be interactive, to allow users to suggest sites that should be blocked or unblocked.

Is this censorship? BBT officials say if the screening service is something desired by consumers, for the benefit of their children, then it doesn't deserve such a pejorative label. They compare it to socially responsible investing, another service BBT offers, which gives consumers assurance that they won't be supporting companies with which they have moral objections.

Addison and BBT think they have a real winner with filtered Internet service. Addison says ClearViewNet will break even with 10,000 subscribers, and he projects that 9,000 to 12,000 Brethren households will subscribe to the new service. Because it is something no other mainline denomination is offering, it has the potential to be marketed to other churches, perhaps even franchised. "The gravy comes from selling it outside the Brethren," Addison says. The hope is that there will be some "gravy" to subsidize other services BBT wants to offer, like financial management for churches and districts.

BBT is clearly excited about its new venture. "At ClearViewNet we definitely feel like paradigm pioneers, expanding the frontier with this new way to access and use the Internet," Addison says. Wil Nolen, president of BBT, puts it this way: "To a great extent, ClearViewNet stands as a prophetic frontier for the Church of the Brethren."

Internet access is only half the new product line that BBT plans to introduce this year. After two years of preparation, officials hope to announce soon that beginning sometime this summer the agency will be selling "socially responsible" mutual funds to individual investors. The mutual funds —one domestic and one international fund— are being developed after a survey showed BBT could potentially attract $20 million to $30 million in retail investments over three to five years. If the funds can attract institutional investors, both from inside the church and outside, then the potential investment pool is much greater. Day-to-day operation of the funds will be done by a partner company, which is a leader in the socially responsible investing field, but the BBT funds will have their own *Wall Street Journal* listings as public mutual funds.



Wil Nolen: "Good financial management is the honest pursuit of the growth of assets. If we don't do it well, our institutions will die."

Wil Nolen, BBT president, acknowledges that some Church of the Brethren members may look askance at an agency of the church aggressively pursuing profitmaking products like Internet access and mutual funds, or helping church members increase their wealth in the stock market. But he explains: "Good financial management is the honest pursuit of the growth of assets. If we don't do it well, our institutions will die."

Michael Addison's pastor, Clyde Fry, recalled to him a quotation from John 14:12, in which Jesus says those who believe in him will do even greater works than he has done. "I always wondered how it could be possible to do greater works than Jesus," Fry wrote in his e-mail message. "Perhaps this mode of communication and access qualifies for one of these 'greater works.'"

Brethrening

A coach's championship record

When the Northwood High School girls basketball team won the Indiana Class 3A State Championship in March, it marked the climax of a 22-year coaching career for Steve Neff. Neff, a member of the Union Center Church of the Brethren, Nappanee, Ind., and a Manchester College graduate, has served as girls basketball coach at Northwood for 22 years, compiling one of the best coaching records in the state of Indiana.

At a Sunday afternoon community pep rally, Nappanee Mayor Larry Thompson presented Neff the keys to the city and read a proclamation declaring Sunday, March 14, as Coach Steve Neff Day in Nappanee. Earlier Sunday morning, after a long trip home from Indianapolis, Steve was in worship with his family at Union Center's 9 a.m. worship service.

In an interesting sidelight on Saturday, the charter bus which was to take the team to Indianapolis for the championship game at Market Square Arena failed to show up. Neff loaded the team in a school bus and drove the team to Indianapolis. A high school biology teacher, Neff quipped, "I still have my license for summer biology, so I had to drive the bus today." It must have been an exciting ride as Neff reported, "We made record time from Nappanee to Indy. We did it in under three hours in that bus. And no speeding tickets." One of the players remarked, "Our driver, well ... he got us there. But that's coach for you, stepping up when you need him to." [used with permission from "Thanks, Coach Neff . . ." by Ben Ford in *The Elkhart Truth*, March 15, 1999].

— submitted by Herman Kauffman, district executive, Northern Indiana

Messenger would like to publish other short, colorful, humorous or poignant stories of real-life incidents involving Brethren. Please send your submission to Messenger, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120-1694 or e-mail to the editor at ffarrar_gb@brethren.org

Under construction

Building the church and housing the homeless in the Dominican Republic

Photos and story by Wayne Zunkel

Samuel José Rivera *and his family enjoy their new home, rebuilt after the ravages of Hurricane Georges. To the left is a home still unrepaired, as the vast majority are.*

Hundreds of Brethren from 18 churches and preaching points across the Dominican Republic came to Campamento Betel, a Mennonite campground near San Juan, for the 8th Annual Assembly of La Iglesia de los Hermanos (the Church of the Brethren). It was like all such Brethren gatherings — a love fest. A time of worship, fellowship, hugs, renewal, goal setting, and, of course, elections and business.

Lowell Flory, Annual Conference moderator, was the Sunday morning speaker. In simple terms, he spoke of some of the things that are basic for Brethren. Guillermo Encarnación, a native of the Dominican, pastor of the Alpha and Omega Church of the Brethren in Lancaster, Pa., and a spiritual leader of the Dominican Brethren, led a Bible study and spoke Saturday night.

In the D.R., Encarnación is in his element. His humor, his mix of evangelical faith and good sense practical wisdom, his many dominicanisms — illustrations from their daily life — make him an instant, beloved leader.

Friday night's opening service was short. Perhaps an hour. It was full of singing — solos and congregational — scripture, and brief messages.

A third of those present at the Assembly were youth. With one-half of the Dominican population under 14, that makes sense. At each service, youth were involved heavily in leadership. Even the little children watched and listened. As I listened to the music, the clapping, the drums, the rhythm, I thought to myself, "One thing is missing! The Nigerians. The Nigerian Brethren would not have understood the language of the mouth, but they would have resonated to the language of the heart. They would have loved it." We must find ways to bring them together!

Saturday morning, the young church heard financial reports and discussed budget. Then the attenders turned to a period of hearing each pastor stand and give a report of the state of their own congregation. They gave membership, attendance, the number of baptisms, and the number of those in membership classes awaiting baptism. The total number of Brethren has grown from 300 a few years ago to from 1,200 to 1,500 today. Most congregations have a dozen to several dozen persons in continuous membership classes preparing for baptism.

A background of pain

The Assembly met against a background of continuing pain from the recent visit of Hurricane Georges. Present were members of a disaster relief unit at work. The nearby town of San Juan at a spot called Mesopotamia (meaning "between two rivers") witnessed the rush of rivers at 3 a.m. during the hurricane. In that one spot in San Juan, Georges left more than 2,000 dead. The raging waters were said to be 12 kilometers wide. Displaced persons still live in the San Juan church building.

Among the decimated homes, Brethren workers had recently been at work. On the inside of one plywood wall in the living room were penciled the words "Brethren Missions Center. New Windsor Md. USA Constructo Jan. 22, 1999."

Many of the people are immaculately neat. Women, in front of their partially destroyed little homes, could be seen sweeping up trash. They were sweeping dirt over dirt, to make sure it was clean.

Also present was a team of 16 construction workers who had just arrived from the US to work alongside members to build the La Vida Verdadera Tabara Abajo church. Earl Ziegler, pastor of the Lampeter, Pa., church, who has done this several times before, was again the coordinator. A member of the Lampeter church, Arthur Kreider, was the foreman.

Workers came from Pennsylvania but also from as far away as Fresno, Calif., and Camp Verde, Ariz. They came for worship Saturday night and Sunday and then headed for their work site. Within a week they hoped to have the structure under roof. Members of the local congregation had poured the footers, will work alongside, and then will do the finishing work when the Americans have gone home.

In the afternoon, after the Assembly was over, many went by vans and cars to a beautiful site in a wide river, Yaque de Sur, to witness baptisms.

Born out of service

The Dominican Church of the Brethren was born out of service. In the aftermath of Hurricane David in 1979, Puerto Rican Brethren Jorge Toledo had come to do disaster relief. By day, he helped rebuild homes. At night people asked why he was there. As he told them, some sought baptism. A church was born at Viajama, so isolated that there had been no church of any kind there before. Not even Roman Catholic.

Now the little village of Viajama was again hit by a hurricane. This time they know they must move. The next storm will wash the entire village away. So they are negotiating for land to relocate completely — the people and the first church — "the Germantown church" of the D.R.

At the Assembly were visitors from the Puerto Rican Church of the Brethren. Always there are members from the Puerto Rican church. At virtually every dedication, special occasion, and celebration. They consider themselves to be the parents of the Dominican church.

At San Luis, because of the hurricane and because some sugar cane fields are now being plowed under for housing developments, the government has closed a sugar cane processing factory. This means long-term unemployment for the people of that village. All are hungry. Some are dying. On Tuesday following the Assembly, 70 persons from the largely Haitian community crowded into the church, which each Sunday is bursting at the seams with worshipers, to explore with Encarnación ways to try to get that decision reversed.

Disaster workers *Eric Hunter, from Toledo, Ohio, and Nathan Brightbill, from Tonasket, Wash.*

The poorest of the poor

A half million to a million workers in the sugar cane fields in northeast Dominican Republic are illegal Haitian refugees. Hurricane Georges destroyed 95 percent of the sugar cane crop so they have little food, impure water, inadequate housing.

Hilcias Ricardo is a doctor who has just finished her internship. She is a member of the Proyecto Peniel church in Santo Domingo, served by pastor Eduardo Montero. She wants to work for two years among these refugees. The work is being coordinated with COTEDO (Comisión de Trabajo Ecumenico Dominicano, Inc.), an agency that works with the poor in the D.R. and has cooperated with the Church of the Brethren on other projects.

For some Dominicans there is prejudice against the Haitians. But the Brethren have reached out to these "strangers" in their midst. The Church of the Brethren in the DR has been invited to provide spiritual support for the Haitian community through preaching and Christian education ministries.

A workcamp of 14 from McPherson College helped rebuild homes, dig latrines, and repair vital windmills in the area of the illegal Haitians.

Members of one family

Jerry and Becky Crouse are newly on the scene. They have come to "walk with" the young Dominican church, as mission coordinators from the US Church of the Brethren. With their vibrant faith, earnestness, and youthful enthusiasm they find ready acceptance. They have hit the ground running.

Soon after they moved into their new home, their four-year-old blonde daughter, Christy, was playing in front. When Becky checked on her, she was nowhere to be seen. Becky went door to door and found her in a home a few doors down. Christy does not yet speak Spanish. The home where she was playing spoke no English. But already the two had bonded. Two different languages. Two different cultures. But fast friends already.

Beneath the tamarind tree, at the spot of the first worship in 1923 in Garkida, Nigeria, is a large plaque that quotes Ephesians 2. As Ken Morse put it in his hymn, "For we are strangers no more, but members of one family." So it is as one moves among the warm and loving members of Las Iglesias de los Hermanos — the Churches of the Brethren in the Dominican Republic. M.

Wayne Zunkel, of the Elizabethtown (Pa.) Church of the Brethren, has traveled three times to visit La Iglesia de los Hermanos (the Church of the Brethren) in the Dominican Republic.

The message of ethnic and urban Brethren is . . .

Let the re-membering begi

PHOTOS AND STORY BY
HOWARD ROYER

On an Urban Peace Tour largely to rural churches in the mid-1990s, Don Mitchell was called upon for a spontaneous testimony. Dumbfounded, he turned to familiar words—"I am a recovering alcoholic"—words he had never before expressed to a group outside of Alcoholics Anonymous.

"I told it like it was, my story with alcoholism, not knowing how the congregation would respond," said the member of Imperial Heights Church of the Brethren, Los Angeles. "To my amazement, people came forward and said, 'Brother, I've been there.' 'Brother, thank you for your sharing.'

"Never in my wildest dreams would I have expected to be embraced by so many."

Don Mitchell's story was among a host of celebrative moments that unfolded at the Ethnic/Urban Consultation of the Church of the Brethren in Kansas City the first weekend of Lent. Other accounts disclosed memories of distress and disappointment, of dreams for urban and ethnic ministries yet unfulfilled.

One such moment recalled the curtailment of the Urban Peace Tour itself, part of a wide swath of cuts in General Board programs. "Urban ministry had become visible in people's homes and churches and hearts, a great time of breaking down walls and building bridges," said Gilbert Romero, pastor of Bella Vista church, Los Angeles, and member of the General Board. "I remember weeping before the General Board upon learning the board couldn't fund the peace tour any more. The one thing that brought us together was taken away."

Others also had laments. Vincent Rivera, pastor of Summit church in Chicago, was dismayed that after five years of striving to bring the Hispanic community together around a fresh design for denominational programming, the plan was scuttled. "We reached the fourth floor and then had to leave the structure unfinished. The damage done seems almost irrepairable."

Mario and Olga Serrano are co-pastors of Principe de Paz, a new church development project based at the former Santa Ana church in California. Mario described the bewilderment the project felt when the Pacific Southwest District and General Board ceased funding.

Belita Mitchell, a member of the Imperial Heights church, said she was energized by the cross-cultural activities of Annual Conferences in Charlotte and Cincinnati, but felt more recent conferences were less intentional about multicultural expression. She asked about compliance with the Portland Annual Conference mandate on greater inclusiveness of African-Americans in the wider church. And she rued the fact that the Black Advisory Committee is defunct.

To give voice to such stories and feelings, to seek healing and restore broken relationships, and to establish common ground for building a multicultural coalition were goals set out for the Kansas City Consultation. Haitian, Hispanic, African-American, Korean, Japanese-American, and Anglo together pondered Galatians 3:26-29 on being "heirs according to the promise." They bore living testimony to the theme selected from that passage, the theme of being "clothed with Christ" in diversity and unity.

When invited to cite particular gifts they and their respective cul-

Voices from Kansas City Voices from Kansas City Voices from Kansas City Voices from Kansas

"A Brethren is a person who has commitment to live in community, to live the simple life, and to have concern for social issues."—Jorge Rivera, associate executive, Atlantic Southeast District, Castañer, Puerto Rico

"To be Brethren is being a member of a very big family, caring for one another, lending a hand."—Marilyn Montauban, college student, First Haitian Church of the Brethren, Brooklyn, NY.

"Being Brethren means expressing love for God, love for fellow human beings, and love for the environment."—Vera Ellwood, lay leader, First Central Church of the Brethren, Kansas City, Kan.

"To be Brethren is to live for Jesus in a setting that develops a faith journey and brings healing."—Vincent Rivera, pastor, Iglesia Evangelica la Nueva Jerusalén, Summit, Ill.

Participants *in the Kansas City Ethnic/Urban Consultation.*

ures bring to the arger church, individuals used such erms as "open and honest communication," "realism," "joy and laughter," "passion," and "hosting people in the house of the Lord."

Of particular note were reports from representatives of the denomination's two Haitian churches, in Miami and Brooklyn. With vigorous support from their respective districts, Atlantic Northeast and Atlantic Southeast, and the wider church, the French- and Creole-speaking congregations have leadership and facilities in place that make for growth.

To guide the consultative process in Kansas City, Phyllis Senesi served as mediator, encouraging participants to speak in candor and with "a loving tongue." Barbara Daté assisted, her Daté Discernment Circle creating a model for listening and understanding in a safe, neutral environment.

The consultation was funded by the five Church of the Brethren congregations of the Metro Parish of Kansas City — First Central, Lenexa, Messiah, Olathe, and Saint Joseph — and by the Church of the Brethren General Board.

Major planners were Irvin Heishman, Richard Kyerematen, Belita Mitchell, Orlando Redekopp, Gilbert Romero, and Terry Shumaker, working with Duane Grady, Congregational Life Team member and event coordinator, and Sonja Griffith, pastor of the host church, First Central in Kansas City.

Of some 15 categories of action steps brainstormed by the group, by far the strongest call was for the establishment of a denominational committee on multiculturalism. Other locuses for change involved inclusiveness training for denominational leaders, development of multi-language resources, and sister-to-sister congregational relationships to promote cross-cultural experiences. A small planning group will meet April 30–May 2 to refine and focus the action proposals.

Recognizing the pressure on church officials as staff and budgets have been diminished, the consultation singled out two participants for special prayers, Glenn Timmons, director of the General Board's Congregational Life Ministries and Emily Mumma, moderator-elect of Annual Conference.

"All of us in some way, to some degree, are 'wounded healers,'" Timmons wrote to participants reflecting on the event. "Like all vessels, the church is subject to imperfections and brokenness, wounded by others who love us, even within the body.

"To tell our story is to be re-membered, reconnected with God, self and others."

The message to the wider church from the ethnic and urban Brethren gathered in Kansas City is, Let the re-membering begin. M.

Howard Royer, is staff for interpretation for the Brethren General Board.

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es from Kansas City Voices from Kansas City Voices from Kansas City

"Being Brethren means being intentional about living our lives with Christ and doing so in community.—Belita Mitchell, lay leader, Imperial Heights Church of the Brethren, Los Angeles, Calif.

"In my congregation you're never white and you're never black. You're just Lower Miami."—Robert Jackson, second-generation member and lay leader, Lower Miami Church of the Brethren, Dayton, Ohio.

"The mission we have been given is to bring some togetherness to the Church of the Brethren."—Tim Wallace, lay leader, Germantown Church of the Brethren, Philadelphia, Pa.

"If we say we live 'Peacefully, Simply, Together' and, if we believe this, we better let God see it."—Gilbert Romero, pastor, Bella Vista Church of the Brethren, Los Angeles, Calif.

Alissa Oppenheimer

God is a tender God

God's example can help us develop a spirit of gentleness

by Harold S. Martin

The word "tenderness" describes an emotion that is gentle, sympathetic, loving, kind, and pitying. Ephesians 4:32 says that we are to be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, "just as God in Christ also forgave you." [All quotations in this article are from the New King James Version.] The phrase "just as God forgave you" indicates something about the immeasurable tenderness of God toward sinful persons.

It is impossible for any of us to totally comprehend the nature of God. The being and attributes of God have always been a profound study. And when we study the nature of God we must be careful not to dwell upon one attribute to the neglect of another. For example, often His mercy is magnified and His majesty is played down; sometimes His love is emphasized and His wrath is denied.

One of the most beautiful and comforting of God's attributes is that of His tenderness. "Tenderness" is an emotion that expresses warm affection, and seeks to share the joys and sorrows of another. God is a tender God, and the tenderness of God is sadly needed in these harsh, loveless days when tenderness is a scarce commodity among human beings. Look, for example, at the hard and tense faces of some of the people who pass by at the mall or in the grocery store. Many who are unusually intelligent have not discovered the secret of a calm and satisfied life, and often do not manifest the qualities of gentleness and tenderness.

In Ephesians 4:32, the Apostle Paul (who himself was once a bitter persecutor of God's people) now urges the Christians at Ephesus to emulate the tenderness of God, when he says: "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you." Our lives should demonstrate the quality of tenderness; otherwise we will find ourselves hard, bitter, unfeeling, and loveless. Experiencing the tenderness of God can soften our characters. John, the Son of Thunder, was later transformed into the apostle of love. The dying thief was likely the equivalent of a modern gangster, but in the presence of Jesus (who was praying for his enemies), the thief was broken up and transformed into a new person.

The Scriptures present us with several illustrations and pictures of God's tenderness, and hopefully these snapshots of divine tenderness will help us develop a new sense of charity and gentleness in our own daily living.

An eagle that flutters

In Deuteronomy 32:11-12 God is described as follows: "As an eagle stirs up her nest, hovers over its young, spreading out its wings, taking them up, carrying them on its wings, so the Lord alone led him." The children of Israel are spoken of here under the figure of "Jacob," their father. The passage illustrates God's instruction and training of Israel during the 40 years in the wilderness. Moses is reviewing those years for the younger generation, just before crossing the Jordan to enter into the land of Canaan.

Three aspects of the eagle's care are indicated by Moses. Keep in mind that the eagle builds her nest high above the ground, often as high as the top of a four-story building.

The eagle stirs up her nest, compelling the young eagles to fly. Wings that are developed and strengthened in the nest must learn to fly, and so out go the young! The mother eagle destroys the nest twig by twig, until the small eagles are so uncomfortable that they just have to go. And so it is that God sometimes acts toward us. He tears our nest to pieces, especially if we become too settled among the things of the world, and too self-satisfied with our own accomplishments.

The mother eagle spreads abroad her wings in order to protect and hide her young from an attack. With her wings, the mother bird can drive off assailants and soar away with her young. At a considerable altitude she will drop the small eagles, compelling them to use their wings—and then, if through any cause they cannot use their wings—she rapidly darts down and places her body beneath the young so that they can rest on her back. The mother eagle stays near, and is quickly ready to help the small eaglets if they are in trouble.

All this is a beautiful glimpse into the tenderness of God. He stirs up our nests; He makes us use our wings; but He constantly shelters us with His strong presence. We face hard places; there are times when the pressure is great and the heat is on—but like the eagle, the Lord undergirds and sees us through! The people of Israel were cast out from their permanent homes in Egypt and brought into the fierce Sinai Desert, but God stood by them and saw to it that none was forsaken.

A father who pities

Another picture of the tenderness of God is given in the 103rd Psalm. "As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust" (Psa. 103:13-14).

There is always a lack in life if one has never had the benefit of a father's influence. Human fathers know how to pity their children when they are in distress. The tenderness of a good father will cause him to punish a child, but not in heated anger. So it is with God. Often, as a father, I could feel the heartbeat in the arms of our children when they were small, and they knew punishment was coming. My wife and I are the parents of six children. When one misbehaved, I would hold the wrist tightly and explain the misdemeanor—and a sense of pity nearly always overwhelmed me. So it is with the Lord.

All of our children at some time or other were in difficult settings. One of our sons fell out of the automobile and onto the blacktop highway. Another son broke his leg while kicking a football playing by himself in the front yard. Our second daughter had a portion of bone removed from her hip and grafted onto a weak spot on the ankle. Our oldest daughter was thrown from an automobile when rounding a curve on a dirt road. One of our sons took some nails from a neighbor and had to make an apology. Our youngest daughter has had seven major surgeries for the removal of brain tumors that continue to be growing in various regions of her head.

Marianne Sackett

Every honest father feels a tender love for his offspring, and our Father God senses the same kind of tenderness for those who have committed their lives to Him. "The Lord pities those who fear him" (Psa. 103:13).

God knows that we are frail and subject to decay, and that we soon sink under a heavy load. He knows that we are easily broken under the pressure of severe trial, and so He tempers His dealings with us, so that we are not tested beyond that which we can bear. "As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear him" (Psa. 103:13).

The mother who comforts

Another picture of God's tenderness is found in the mother who comforts her child. Isaiah 66:13 says, "As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you."

A good mother is a precious person, and a mother's attitude toward her child gives us another insight into the heart of God. It is to the mother that a child usually runs when there are tears to be kissed away. The little poem says:

> "Who ran to help me when I fell,
> And would some pretty story tell,
> Or kiss the place to make it well?
> My mother."

God reveals himself in the Bible by using more than 300 names. One of the names for God is "El Shaddai"—a term that means "the breasted one." A fretful child will often soon fall asleep upon the tender pillow of a mother's breast.

One of the wonders of the nature of God is the fact that He is able to function both as a father and a mother. Our God combines in one entity all the qualities of noble-hearted fatherhood, and all the qualities of gentle, tender motherhood. As a father, He can inspire courage and fortitude when we are in the troubled hours of life, and like a concerned mother, He can bring comfort and peace.

God says (in Isaiah 66:13), concerning the future of Israel, "As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you." Our God is a tender God.

A bridegroom who rejoices

The third picture of the tenderness of God is that of a bridegroom who is in the midst of rejoicing. Isaiah 62:5 says, "As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you."

This is another glimpse into the tenderness of God. Watch the young man as his wedding day approaches. Notice the fond expression when he is in the presence of the girl who will become his bride. There is a rich joy and a deep satisfaction in his soul as he awaits the time when the two shall be united in the bonds of matrimony.

Believers are spiritually joined in marriage to Christ. The bride of Christ is His church (Rev. 21:9), and someday He s coming to claim His own.

Once a bridegroom takes his bride he is supposed to pos-ess her until death parts them. The bridegroom endows the bride with all his worldly goods, and they become each other's. Thus it is in the spiritual realm: The bride and bridegroom typify the relation existing between Christ and he church. Believers are the bride of Christ and they have been endowed with all the Lord Jesus has; we are joint heirs with Him, but we are physically absent from Him now. Surely we long for the time when He will return to claim His bride, and God's people will enjoy His presence throughout eternity. "As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you" (Isa. 62:5).

A hen that gathers

Jesus says, as recorded in Matthew 23:37, "O Jerusalem . . . how often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!" In this passage the Lord Jesus compares His saving and persevering mercy to a hen covering her brood with her wings in times of danger.

Jesus knew that the Roman armies were about to totally destroy the city of Jerusalem, and thus He pleaded with the inhabitants of the city to seek the shelter that He so willingly offered. Doubtless, Jesus often watched a mother hen calling her young beneath her sheltering wing, and He saw how the little chicks would rush for protection. But here were people who brazenly refused God's protection, and the tenderness of Jesus was stirred.

The message on divine tenderness will be incomplete unless we remember that if the forgiveness from God's tender heart is spurned, and if one goes on in carelessness and loose living, then another side of God's nature is seen. Tough, hard, and unbending justice must operate upon the individual who ultimately and finally rejects God's love. If a soul dies without Christ, then the righteous judgment of the Almighty will fall upon the guilty sinner.

Therefore, may each Christian, as opportunity affords, urge sinners to be wise, and to respond to the tenderness of God, while the invitation to flee from the "wrath to come" is still being extended. We call upon every responsible human being to remember that our God in tenderness calls for sinners to embrace the arms of Jesus and find eternal refuge in His care.

Harold Martin, of York, Pa., is married to Priscilla Martin, and they are the parents of six children. He is a non-salaried minister in the Pleasant Hill congregation, Southern Pennsylvania District, and is on the staff of the Brethren Revival Fellowship.

Brethrening

What a baptism it was!

Having been raised Christian Scientist, I was never baptized as a youth. In fact wasn't until last year, when I was 56 years old, that I was baptized. I had been seeking not only a different job but also a church where I could feel at home. I thank God every day that I found both at Highland Avenue Church of the Brethren. Add to these blessings a boss like Pastor Don Shank!

I knew from the first time I attended the Highland Avenue church that, whether or not I got the job as church secretary, this was the church for me. I attended subsequent services and eventually Pastor Don's inquirer's classes. I also studied quite a bit of material about the Brethren and then made my decision. I wanted to join this church and I wanted to be baptized.

I had heard about trine immersion but was astonished to learn it was still practiced – and it was practiced at Highland Avenue! If I wanted to be baptized, I too had to be dunked. I had to think about this, I confess. Coming to understand the reasoning behind it, I made my choice and asked to join the church through baptism.

I have always been a real "water rat." I told Pastor Don this, commenting that because of this he wouldn't have to hold my nose. He forgot. There I was in the baptistry, wet past my knees, ready to be dunked. Pastor Don grabbed my nose and as I went under I opened my mouth and gulped in a great big mouthful of water. Through the other two dunkings I was praying – praying not to have a choking fit.

After the third dunking, I remained on my knees as Pastor Don said the final words. Before he was through, the layers of clothing—which modesty had dictated I wear—billowed from being in the water so long. I started to float away! Seeing my predicament, he quickly helped me to my feet. It truly was a "whoops, better get her quick" kind of thing.

Yes, the situation was humorous, yet I went out of that baptistry feeling different somehow. As I changed clothes alongside another newly baptized woman in the ladies room, we shared our joy and gladness in being baptized. —Pam Keller

Pam Keller is administrative assistant at Highland Avenue Church of the Brethren, Elgin, Ill.

Messenger *would like to publish other short, colorful, humorous or poignant stories of real-life incidents involving Brethren. Please send your submission to* Messenger, *1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120-1694 or e-mail to the editor at ffarrar_gb@brethren.org*

Letters

I recognize because of my own failings how easy it is to justify the route that seems easier in the short term.

Casting stones

Your January/February issue of MESSENGER contained an unusual article by Dale Brown contending that lying under oath, or perjury, is not such a bad thing, because lying is often justified (and he gives examples) and because Brethren reject oaths, making lying under oath no worse than any other lying.

The author of the article makes it clear that his interest is in the impeachment of Bill Clinton for committing perjury, and admonishes us that, in Mr. Clinton's case, we should not be concerned with judgment or hatred, but that those without sin should cast the first stone.

Yet Mr. Brown proceeds to cast his own stones, and to make judgments against others regarding their truthfulness, alleging that those who maintain that impeachment is "not about sex" are lying, and that those who term Judge Kenneth Starr an independent counsel are also lying.

The truth is that perjury is a serious crime, despite what your article claims; the Ten Commandments still include "Thou shalt not bear false witness." And, contrary to what your article claims, Mr. Clinton was impeached for perjury, and not for adultery; and Judge Starr was in fact appointed by the courts as an independent counsel, since the Attorney General is obviously not independent of the president.

It is astonishing that you would print such an internally contradictory and obviously incorrect article; this was not a letter to the editor expressing a viewpoint, but an attempt to find some ground on which to defend Bill Clinton. There is a feeling by many within the church that our leadership is more loyal to the tenets of the Democratic Party than it is to the tenets of the Christian religion and the Church of the Brethren, and this feeling is reinforced by this article.

Walter McSherry
Spartanburg, S.C.

Longing for that fire

I am from a society with about 5 percent of the global population, a percentage that uses or controls about 50 percent of the resources being used in our world today. This is true in a world that has far surpassed any sustainable limits in its style of living.

I have recently come from and will be shortly returning to Chiapas, Mexico. There I have been privileged to be frequently in a community of refugees, displaced just over a year ago by violence and militarization in their home communities. These displaced people, driven to the limits of human existence, are modeling in bold and dramatic ways some of the sustainable social, economic, and political answers to the difficult questions facing our world.

As I look around at nearby institutions of my church—congregation, college, retirement community—I ask why these bodies of the church are not also more involved in grappling with these serious problems facing us as a people.

The vision we have held as a denomination has led to transforming moments for me. BVS in Mississippi, disaster work with the Brethren in Guatemala, Christian Peacemaker Teams in Gaza Strip, work camps with the folks of Butler Chapel, S.C. Others of you met this vision on cattle boats to Europe, mission work in Nigeria, quilting for relief of war zones, with civil rights work in the South, with housing rehabs in Habitat, resettling Japanese-Americans from the US concentration camps, and numerous other experiences.

I need my church to keep pushing me to be transformed. Once or twice is not enough. We seem to do that best for each other by openness to vulnerability, opportunities for service, by seeing Jesus in the least of these, by constantly connecting our institutions to the vision of God's New Creation—a world of right relationship—vertical and horizontal, of biblical justice, of nonconforming wonder, of gospel love, of Sermon-on-the-Mount peacemaking, of costly discipleship, and of resurrection miracles.

I recognize because of my own failings how easy it is to justify the route that seems easier in the short term. But I realize that the displaced in the refugee camps of Chiapas are more tuned than we are presently to the gospel message of Jesus and the reign of God. How do we in the Church of the Brethren get encircled again by the same Holy Spirit fire? What kind of action, prayer, queries, dreams, and worship will it take?

Cliff Kind
North Manchester, Ind

Honor new members

We have been both Brethren and MESSENGER subscribers for a year and have an observation to share. During this year, we have heard talk of the diminishing membership, of "How do we stop the decline," etc. Fred serves on a planning commission where the same dark talk comes up.

For months we counted the numbers of new members listed in MESSENGER vs. deaths listed and new

iembers always "won," often by
iore than two to one. Now in the
)ecember MESSENGER we have an
ıdex which, among other headings,
sts deaths. Where are the new
iembers listed and celebrated?

We suggest we are able to attract
nembers but not hold them. Rather
han wring hands, maybe more
hought and honoring should be
iven these new Brethren. We know
ome congregations are growing, so
naybe more articles on their "growth
esponses" would be useful.

For us, have no fear; we are both
)eing nurtured and have found what
ve need. For others this may not be so.

Fred and Ann Norton
Loveland, Colo.

Iot all Bible is equal

'The Bible says" is a popular phrase
n Christian circles these days. It is
often used as an authoritative way by
ɔreachers to clinch a point or close a
liscussion.

"Well, what's wrong with that?" you might ask. "Isn't the Bible the rule of faith and practice, as some have defined it?" Certainly the Bible is central for the believer, for it is the story of God's dealing with people from early times.

But the phrase raises a concern. It is often used as a way to legitimize the passage cited anywhere it is found in the Bible. It is as though all writings are of equal importance, equal truth.

Jesus didn't seem to think so. Consider the account of the temptation of Jesus as recorded in Luke 4:1-13. The devil said to Jesus, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." Jesus responds by quoting Deuteronomy 8:3, essentially, ". . . one does not live by bread alone."

In the second encounter, Jesus is offered the kingdoms of the world if Jesus will worship the devil. Jesus counters with Deuteronomy 6:13: "You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve."

The third time the devil is armed with scripture. When he tempts Jesus to show off his trust in God by jumping off the temple roof, the devil quotes Psalm 91:11-12. But Jesus's reply is to quote another scripture, Deut. 6:16: ". . . you shall not tempt the Lord your God."

This indicates that Jesus did not see all scriptures of equal importance. There has to be another way to understand it. The Apostle Paul instructs young Timothy: "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved by him, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly explaining the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15).

I have appreciated the wisdom and instruction I received over the years of how to rightly handle the Bible. While we revere all 66 writings as sacred, we read and comprehend it in the light of the New Testament. The late Dr. Rufus Bowman said often that we should "read the Bible from the Gospels out." He suggested that we begin with the Sermon on the Mount.

It is not irreverent to ask, "The Bible says what?" and follow this by, "How does this square with the life, teachings, and example of Jesus and the early church?"

Herbert A. Fisher
Mountain Grove, Mo.

Make plans now to attend the

MESSENGER Dinner

at Annual Conference

"The view from the editor's pew"

Speaker: Fletcher Farrar, editor of MESSENGER
Music by folksinger Peg Lehman

July 1, 1999
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Get acquainted with Fletcher Farrar, the new editor of MESSENGER, as he describes the excitement he felt on discovering the Church of the Brethren, and his observations on the church after a year on the staff.

Singer Peg Lehman has been delighting audiences for years with her songs that tell stories, celebrate life, honor family ties, respect the earth, nurture tolerance, and promote peace and justice. Her music will touch the hearts of MESSENGER Dinner guests.

For dinner tickets, call the Annual Conference office at 800-323-8039 or order from advance packet order form. Tickets also available in Milwaukee at Annual Conference ticket sales.

CHECK OUT
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Mesa, AZ 85207 (602) 985-8819
Sunday Services 10:15 AM

Phoenix First Church of the Brethren
3609 N. 27th Street
Phoenix, AZ 85016 (602) 955-8537
Sunday Services 10:45 AM

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WANTED: Enthusiastic visionary leader with strong record of performance and team-building as PRESIDENT/CEO of Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community (VMRC). VMRC is a leading full-continuum retirement community located in Harrisonburg, Va. in the Shenandoah Valley. Current President/CEO is retiring. New leader must be dedicated Christian with high integrity, have an understanding of Anabaptist beliefs, be willing to join a sponsoring Mennonite congregation, have at least 5+ years of key management experience, preferably in senior housing/services or healthcare, and a passion for this field. Masters degree preferred. Send resume/inquiries to Kirk Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St., Suite A, Goshen, IN 46526 or fax to 219-534-3254.

TRAVEL

Travel with a purpose: Joan and Wendell Bohrer present Spain, Portugal, and Morocco, Aug. 5-8, 1999. 15 days at $2,799, with all accommodations except lunch. Visit Lisbon, Madrid, Seville, Granada, and a great deal more. NOTE: There is room available on our Passion Play Tours for the year 2000. For information, write, tel/fax or e-mail rdwboh@strato.net. Tel/fax: 941-382-9371. After April 1: 8520 Royal Meadow Dr., Indianapolis, IN 46217, rdwboh@aol.com, Tel/fax 317-882-5067.

Treasures of Italy. Travel on Nov. 2, 1999 from Washington, D.C. (Dulles Airport) to Rome, then to Sorrento-Capri (via Pompeii), Assisi, Venice (via San Marino), Stressa (via Verona), and Florence (via Genoa and Pisa). Price: $2,198 per person. This 14-day tour includes hotels, breakfasts, 10 dinners, sightseeing, airport transfers, and services of a professional tour director. Deposit $300 and/or request brochure from: Wayne F. Geisert, President Emeritus, Bridgewater College, Box 40, Bridgewater, VA 22812. Phone: 540-433-1433 or 828-5494.

Brethren Press Marketing Manager

Full-time position based in Elgin, Ill. Application deadline: May 25.

For more information, contact:
Elsie Holderread at
800-742-5100 or e-mail
eholderread_gb@brethren.org

Office of Human Resources
Church of the Brethren General Board.

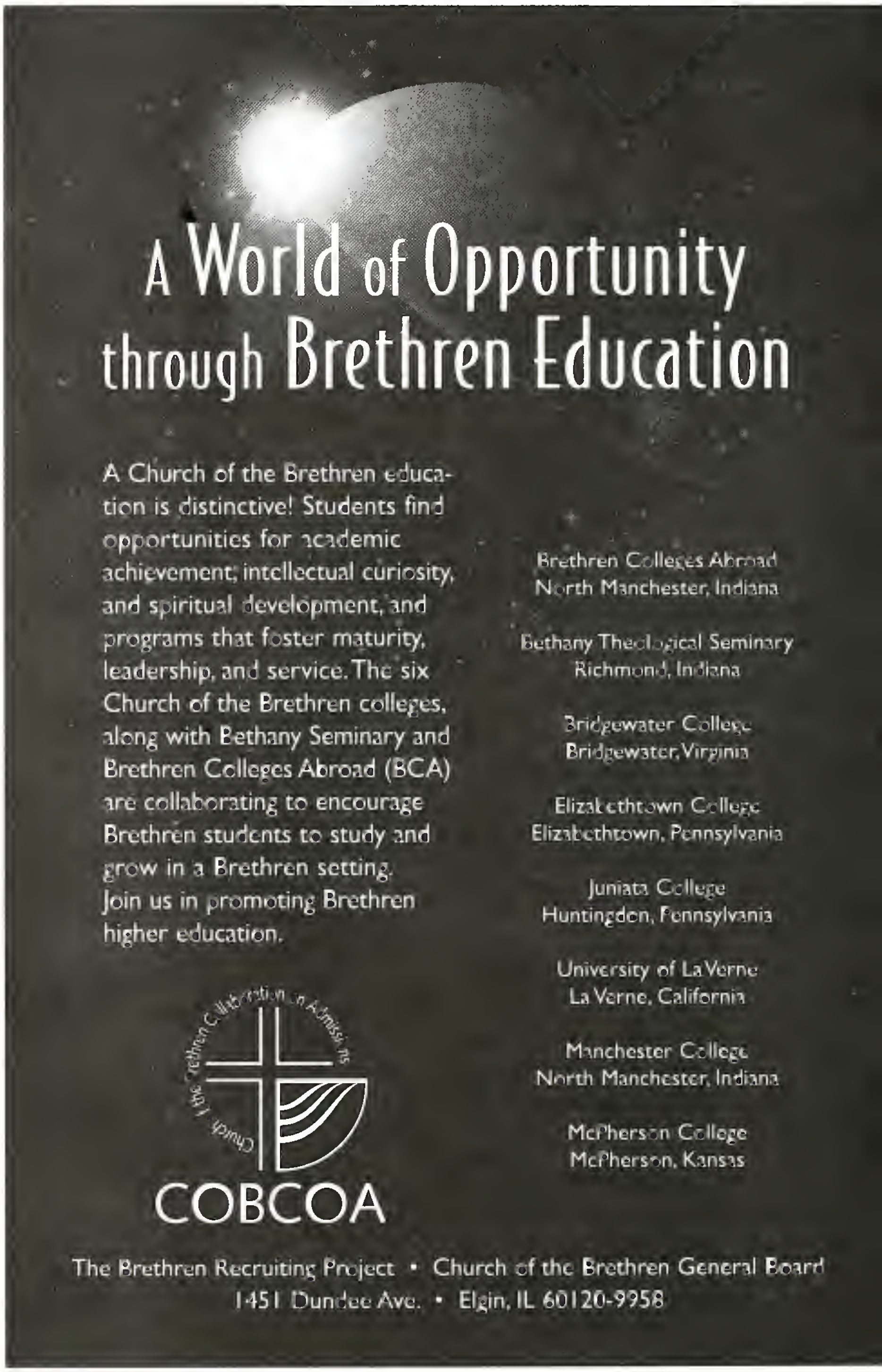
Position Opening for Manager of Office Operations

The General Board seeks a Manager of Office Operations. This full-time staff position is located in Elgin, Illinois, and works directly with the Executive Director. Coordinating schedule, assisting with correspondence, record and file keeping, assigning priorities to the work of the Executive Director's office, and channeling inquiries are key responsibilities. Other responsibilities include assisting in preparation of agendas and exhibits, recording and distributing minutes of board and committee meetings, and logistical planning for the General Board's three yearly meetings.

The ideal candidate will exhibit the following qualifications and qualities:

- committed to operating out of the General Board mission and dedicated to denominational and ecumenical objectives
- appreciation for Church of the Brethren heritage, theology, and polity
- excellent communication skills
- organization management skills
- high energy and motivation for excellence
- proficiency with computer technology
- Bachelor's degree or other education relevant to the position

Application materials are due by May 21, 1999. For further information contact Elsie Holderread, Manager of Human Resources, 1451 Dundee Avenue, Elgin, Ill., or e-mail eholderread_gb@brethren.org



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Turning Points

New members

Antelope Valley, Billings, Okla.: Donald, Cindy, Jason, and Brian Yunker

Bakersfield, Calif.: Beverly Monji, Sammy Johns, Kathy Johnson

Briery Branch, Dayton, Va.: Lena K. Cook, Jeremy Craig, Joshua Craig, Greg Cummings, Mary C. Dove, Aaron Eye, Andrew Eye, Conrad T. Eye, Gene F. Fitzwater, Brandon Garst, Shay Garst

Buffalo Valley, Mifflinburg, Pa.: Amy Bastian, Matthew Everett, Caleb Fox, Heather Farnsworth, Ann Hofmann, Mary Keister, Christine Lamey, Jason Lamey, Kaitlin Spaid, Andrew Richard, Doug Richard, Frank Rosenerans

Chambersburg, Pa.: Linda Sharar, Tom Ezolt, Randy Hoekenberry, Tommy Nguyen, Bertha Snyder

Chiques, Manheim, Pa.: Chad Brady, Kristen Cox, Alisha Shelly, Derek Shelly, Erin Shelly, Nathan Shelly, Daryl Ebersole, David and Frieda Shelly

Decatur, Ill.: Rick Szewezyk, Dale Szewezyk, Don Lair

East Fairview, Manheim, Pa.: Dave Barley, Greg Berkey, Nancy Leed, Kerry Myer, Glen and Nancy Roberts, Judy Youngeberg, Stacia Detter, Jeremy Thilo

Fairview-Mount Clinton, Harrisonburg, Va.: Kim Boyers, John Deavers, Kathy Deavers, Danielle Hoover, Michelle Hunt, Vicki Hunt, Jackie Self, Barry Smith, Brandi Spitzer, Darlene Taylor, Henry Terry, Valerie Terry

Fellowship, Martinsburg, W.Va.: Carl and Juanita Lewis, John and Tona Stevian

Florin, Mount Joy, Pa.: Ronald J. and Candace L. Grasser, Eric McComsey, Christopher K. and Cindy C. Wilson

Good Shepherd, Blacksburg, Va.: Doris Martin, Alisa Ersoz, Bruce Hissong, Kevin Richey

Green Tree, Oaks, Pa.: Jaclyn Levengood, Sheryl Sloan, Ruth Vogt

Greenmount, Harrisonburg, Pa.: Dale and Evelyn Basinger, Alvin B. and Larissa Dove, Elijah Andrievich

Hope, Freeport, Mich.: Calvin Seese

Maple Grove, New Paris, Ind.: Ben Bernaert, Brooke Clayton, Erin Kauffman, Jaimene Kirkdorffer

Memorial, Martinsburg, Pa.: LouAnn Over

Middle Creek, Lititz, Pa.: Gary Myer, Chris Myer, David Beckman, Patti Beckman, Eric Beckman, Michelle Brubaker

Myerstown, Pa.: Barney and Rhea Braun, Richard Brown, Bill and Edna Yoh, Marcie Hill, Donna Layser, Travis Brubaker, Brian Smith, Megan Walmer, Katie Dieffenbach, Mark Seldomridge, Kevin Wenrich

Nampa, Idaho: Debi Alsager, Lars Alsager, Rick Alsager, Lindsey Gorrell, Julie Hyslop, Jack Johns, Marlus Johns, Crystal Lamica, Alice Stickney, Gordon Stickney

New Beginnings, Warrensburg, Mo.: Eldred Kingery, Charla Kingery

New Carlisle, Ohio: Karen Slattery

Onekama, Mich.: Jack and Gail Nichols, Brenda Vallie

Panora, Iowa: Don and Pam Parsons, Mel Tessman and Cheryl Starkweather, Gaylord and Jan Johnson, Robert and Dolly Hayes, Judy and Tylor Long, Kurt and Mindy Duis, Betsey Leo, Jenny Harper, Beverly Craft

Pasadena, Calif.: Melinda Brogan, Richard Calkins

Pomona Fellowship, Pomona, Calif.: Dean and Diane Kieffaber, Joel and Kim Ruhartz, Nanci Vardaman

Root River, Preston, Minn.: Shauna Broadwater, Laura Broadwater, Hannah Serfling, Victoria Nolt, Bradley Nolt, Chris Peterson, Nicholas Peterson, Zachary Steinmetz

Spring Creek, Hershey, Pa.: Nicholas Breon, Kyle Lehman, Alison Peters, Michelle Thomas

Sugar Creek West, Lima, Ohio: David Ryan Hackworth, Brian Lawrence Mauk, Bryan James White

Sugar Valley, Loganton, Pa.: Tom and Kathleen Owens

Union Center, Nappanee, Ind.: Kel Miller, Conley Carter, Mark and Kerri Kunze, Glenn and Bonnie Searer, Steven Stouder, Ruth Hochstetler, Nick and Sharon Plank II

Waterford, Calif.: Melissa Miller, Stacy Switzer, James Switzer

Woodbury, Pa.: Heather Houp, Jaren Love, Micah Stapleton, Ryan Stapleton, Stephen Wagner

Wedding Anniversaries

Bechtel, Merle and Fay, Sebring, Fla., 55

Butzer, David and Mary, Akron, Pa., 65

Clay, Vernon and Josephine, Hartville, Ohio, 60

Croy, Merl and Phyllis, Wakarusa, Ind., 55

Faust, Chester and Gladys, Chambersburg, Pa., 50

Flora, Clifford and Louise, Elkhart, Ind., 60

Fox, Melvin and Celia, Chambersburg, Pa., 50

Frederick, Burton and Mary Jean, Goshen Ind., 60

Frenger, Bon and Ada, Syracuse, Ind., 50

Herr, Francis and Lois, Nappanee, Ind., 50

Irelan, James Sr. and Betty, Bristol, Ind., 50

Lineweaver, Warren and Mary, Myerstown, Pa., 60

Machamer, Vernon and Patricia, North Canton, Ohio, 50

McCort, Pat and Elizabeth, Hartville, Ohio, 60

Myer, Harold and Grace, Frederica, Del., 50

Peck, Paul and Genevieve, Troy, Ohio, 60

Pippenger, Harold and Irene, Nappanee, Ind., 65

Price, Howard and LaRue, Windber, Pa., 50

Rager, Dean and Lois, Johnstown, Pa., 50

Rotz, Robert and Margaret, Chambersburg, Pa., 50

Shimp, Chelcie and Margaret, Troy, Ohio, 60

Smith, Arlington and Mary Jane, Lebanon Pa., 50

Stermer, Melvin and Dorothy, Hartville, Ohio, 60

Wise, Roy and Dorothy, North Canton, Ohio, 60

Wittler, Albert and Catherine, Sebring, Fla., 55

Wright, Gene and Nita, Troy, Ohio, 60

Zimmerman, Stanley and Jessie, Bristol, Ind., 55

Deaths

Arnold, Hazel, 92, Pontoon Beach, Ill., Dec. 2

Alexson, Evelyn, 82, Rockford, Ill., Jan. 28

Arey, Alma H., 83, Harrisonburg, Va., Jan. 23

Barb, Anna L., 70, Edinburg, Va., Jan. 16

Barner, Raymond, 80, Loganton, Pa., September

Barnes, Debra, 41, Huntington, Ind., Jan. 6

Bendsen, Olga, 86, North Manchester, Ind., Jan. 2

Blickenstaff, Ray, 96, Nampa, Idaho, April 8

Boone, Helen, 83, Modesto, Calif., Jan. 18

Bowers, Lawrence David Sr., 91, Bridgewater, Va., Jan. 22

Bowman, Harold E., 88, Harrisonburg, Va., Dec. 31

Brechbill, Roy W., 89, Chambersburg, Pa., Sept. 13

Brehm, Eva, 82, Davidsville, Pa., Nov. 22

Burroughs, Russell, 64, Fort Wayne, Ind. Mar. 17

Campbell, Catherine, 67, Warren, Ind., Aug. 5

Confer, Thelma, Lock Haven, Pa., Dec. 15

Cook, Gladys Mae, 94, New Carlisle, Ohio, Jan. 6

Covalt, Earl, 91, Johnstown, Pa., Dec. 1

Cox, Meral, 81, Lock Haven, Pa., March, 1998

Crichton, Avis, 93, Nampa, Idaho, July 8

Crider, Carroll L. "Fuzz," 50, Dayton, Va., Jan. 25

Crill, Hazel, 84, Nampa, Idaho, Jan. 24

Douglas, Alois E., 75, San Diego, Calif., Jan. 6

Driver, Erva Cupp, Harrisonburg, Va., Nov. 2

Driver, John, 76, Lafayette, Ohio, Nov. 23

Driver, Viola Cook, Dayton, Va., Sept. 12

Eaton, John B., 86, Harrisonburg, Va., Jan. 13

Ebling, Reuben, 94, Ridgely, Md., Jan. 14

Ellsworth, Alonzo, 83, Lewiston, Minn., Jan. 1

Ewalt, Dorothy, 72, Harmony, Minn., Sept. 25

Good, Harold C., 73, Red Lion, Pa., Jan. 18

Graham, Frank, Hartville, Ohio, Dec. 8

Graves, Jerri, 56, Billings, Okla., Nov. 5

Heckman, Ellenar, Richland Township, Pa., Nov. 30

Henninger, Paul H., 57, Stuarts Draft, Va., Jan. 21

Holsinger, Anna L., 86, Timberville, Va., Jan. 21

Hoover, Gussie, 89, Windber, Pa., Feb. 9, 1998

Horst, Mervin, Cornwall, Pa., Oct. 29

Humphrey, Esther, 87, Huntington, Ind., July 24

Humphrey, George, 88, Huntington, Ind., Dec. 16, 1997

Jett, Beulah Esta, 93, Woodstock, Va., Jan. 16

Johns, Christ, 94, Manheim, Pa., Jan. 10

Keeling, J. Calvin, 72, Bakersfield, Calif., Dec. 15

Keeny, Charles E., 86, New Oxford, Pa., Jan. 29

Keim, Minnie, 97, Nampa, Idaho, May 9

Knudson, Leota, 87, Nampa, Idaho, April 12, 1998

Lanham, Raymond Osborne, 85, Broadway, Va., Jan. 17

Lehman, Wilbur, 81, Windber, Pa., Dec. 29

Lohr, Mabel Lee, 89, Quicksburg, Va., Jan. 14

Masincup, Inez C., 60, Staunton, Va., Jan. 11

Miller, Weldon A., 86, Dayton, Va., Jan. 25

Mitchell, Joseph B., 90, Bridgewater, Va., Jan. 13

Mohler, Russell G. Sr., 77, Linville, Va., Jan. 27

Morey, Vera, 91, Preston, Minn., Jan. 3, 1998

Nichols, Ronald, 54, Huntington, Ind., Dec. 16, 1997

Patrick, Vincent Sr., 81, Windber, Pa., Nov. 27

Penrod, Floyd, 81, Windber, Pa., Jan. 2

Replogle, Donald, 92, Lakeview, Ohio, Dec. 23

Richard, Ann, Bluffton, Ohio, Dec. 3

Roberts, George Sr., 96, Johnstown, Pa., Nov. 3

Rock, Lova H., 69, Troutville, Va., July 10

Saul, Ernest, Richland, Pa., Dec. 16

Senour, John M., 84, Pasadena, Calif., Jan. 22

Shaver, Viola M., 77, Harrisonburg, Va., Dec. 26

Sheaffer, Ray G., 68, North Canton, Ohio, Oct. 9

Snyder, Lois A., 82, North Canton, Ohio, July 9

Stapleton, Earl H., 88, Martinsburg, Pa., Jan. 24

Swank, Edith, 93, Sebring, Fla., Jan. 28

Thorp, Gladys Pearl, 77, Mathias, W.Va., Jan. 25

Underbakke, Maynard, 79, Preston, Minn., May 4

Van Antwerpen, Thelma, 93, Modesto, Calif., Jan. 23

Waterman, Naomi, Nampa, Idaho, May 31

Weaver, Justice H., 75, Mathias, W.Va., Jan. 18

Winters, Dortha E., 84, Mercersburg, Pa., Jan. 5

Wise, Mary, 71, Goshen, Ind., Sept. 16

Wood, Sarah, Hartville, Ohio, February

Yager, Naomi, 96, Craigville, Ind., Dec. 29

Yokum, Lester, 92, Petersburg, W.Va., Jan. 31

Young, Mildred A., 84, Hartville, Ohio, Aug. 28

Zimmerman, Ida M., 98, Martinsburg, Pa., Nov. 1

Licensings

Freeman, J.P., Sept. 10, West Manchester, North Manchester, Ind.

Rempel, Jeanne, Oct. 10, Olympic View, Seattle, Wash.

Sgro, John A., Nov. 10, Sebring, Fla.

Taylor, Rudolph Hamilton III, March 16, 1997, Cloverdale, Va.

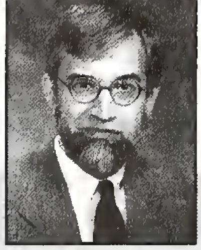
Brockway, Joshua, Nov. 7, East Nimishillen, North Canton, Ohio

Ordinations

Carter, Alfred K., Dec. 17, 1976, Stony Creek, Bellefontaine, Ohio

Dinkins-Curling, Jeffrey, Jan. 15, 1995, Pitsburg, Arcanum, Ohio

Leftwich, Danny, May 16, Mount Airy First, Mount Airy, N.C.



Editorial

Squelch the squelchers

Annual Conference has a last chance this year to squelch a bad idea called "Process Regarding Unfunded Annual Conference Mandates." This proposal would create a committee that could squelch any good ideas that might come before the church, simply by crying, "There's no money!" While it is true that "there's no money" is already employed at all levels of the church by tired souls who lack imagination, this would create an official "there's-no-money" committee to make doubly sure that nothing new or different ever gets done.

The proposal came out of a beleaguered General Board in the depths of its redesign doldrums in October 1996. Understandably the board felt that its money woes resulted not from its own mismanagement, waste, or lack of promotion, but because it was trying to do too many things Annual Conference asked it to do. This would show them. From now on, if Annual Conference tells us to do something, let them give us the money! The resolution would create a Program Feasibility Committee, made up of board members and standing committee members, to conduct a feasibility study and cost analysis of every "unfunded mandate" passed by Annual Conference. In 1997 Standing Committee sent it to 1998 Annual Conference, which postponed it to 1999 Annual Conference. This was to allow the new Annual Conference agencies—On Earth Peace Assembly and Association of Brethren Caregivers— a chance to get in on the action. Rather, inaction.

More often than not, obeying Jesus will not win the approval of a Program Feasibility Committee.

Money follows good ideas, not vice versa. Do what God loves and the money will follow. More often than not, obeying Jesus will not win the approval of a Program Feasibility Committee. Often what the church is called to do is just not feasible at all.

What if God had taken his Creation idea before the Program Feasibility Committee? "God, do you have any idea what this is going to cost? Why, the heavens and the earth are more than we can afford, let alone sea monsters and fruit trees of every kind! The idea is a good one, but it needs work."

Or how would Jesus have fared with the "there's-no-money committee"? Changing water into wine wouldn't have gotten very far at all, I think, and it might have taken him a while to convince the group that healing lepers doesn't cost as much as you think. Feeding the 5,000, on the other hand, is a quantifiable program with possibilities. My guess is that, after a two- or three-year campaign, the money could be raised to get them fed.

Paul's missionary journeys surely cost too much, not to mention the unfunded mandate faced by the apostles to start a church and spread it throughout the world. How many of the best achievements of the Church of the Brethren would never have gotten past the squelchers? Just think of young Ted Chambers climbing on his orange crate to propose to the 1948 Annual Conference the motion that created Brethren Volunteer Service. "That's fine, young man," the chair might have said. "We'll assign it to the Program Feasibility Committee." And we never would have heard of the unfunded mandate called BVS again.

It's time we get our fearful budget guards out of the way and let the Holy Spirit work. Church people know that many of the best ideas don't take much money, and even expensive ideas often prove easy if everybody is behind them. Church people also know that sometimes things get funded that not everybody wants—call these funded non-mandates, if you will. Should we appoint a committee to look into these as well?

If a proposal is truly a mandate of Annual Conference, then it won't go unfunded for long—unless, that is, the squelchers kill it first. We donors need challenges, not complacency. Might giving grow even faster if there were more unfunded mandates asking for us to fund them? Rather than look for ways to shoot down Annual Conference proposals, it would be nice to foster some friendly competition among program boards to see which could implement the most new ideas the fastest. That would get the church moving in a positive direction.

The unfunded mandates proposal should be voted down because it would cost our church too much. It would cost us our spirit, our creativity, our spontaneity, our dynamic response to God's will. The theme of the upcoming Annual Conference is not "Let the fearful church demise." It is, rather, a powerful call to courage: "Let the servant church arise!"—Fletcher Farrar

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(Luke 5:10–11)

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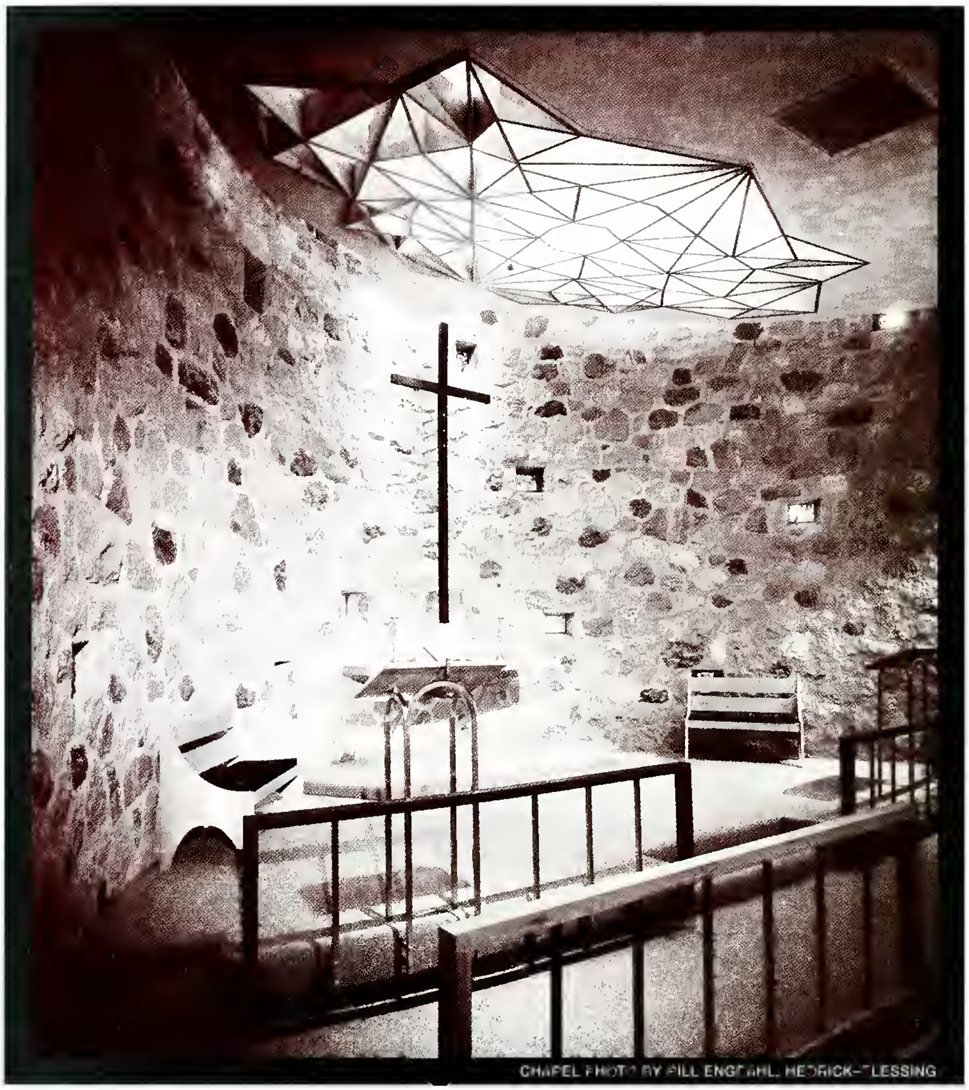
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Messenger

O grant us grace to reach, to give,
To touch the dreams by which we live.

—Kenneth I. Morse, 1913–1999

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Messenger

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Editor: Fletcher Farrar
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On the cover: Kenneth I. Morse is best known as author of the hymn favorite, "Move in Our Midst." But following his death March 23, remembrances by friends and colleagues have introduced his rich life to a new generation of Brethren who never knew him personally. According to Howard Royer, a ongtime co-worker and friend of Morse who writes this nonth's cover story, he was not only a renowned hymnvriter and editor, he was one of those rare individuals vhose life and character shape the character of the church.

The cover illustration for Kenneth Morse's book on worhip, *Move in Our Midst*, is a photograph by Wilbur rumbaugh of empty pews. The photo on this month's ESSENGER cover, perhaps taken at the same time but nidentified in the archives, shows Morse seated in those ews, reflecting his lively interest in public worship. "I can't hink of a more appropriate setting for Ken than in a sanc-uary," comments Royer.

Features

12 **Ken Morse remembered**
It is one of Ken Morse's lesser known hymns, "O God of mystery and might" (*Hymnal* #130), that inspired the title to Howard Royer's tribute, "Grace to touch the dream."

16 **Walter Wink on Kosovo**
When NATO bombs began dropping on Yugoslavia, Messenger turned to theologian Walter Wink, a leading contemporary advocate of nonviolence, to ask what should be the Christian response. His answers are provocative.

20 **Getting spiritually ready for Y2K**
It is our interior computers that Ken Gibble wants to be sure are ready for the millennium. He writes: "We should use the coming days and weeks to reflect prayerfully on the ways God has been and will be at work in human history and in our own lives."

22 **Pitfalls of pastoral counseling**
A counselee might wonder, "Was that me the pastor was talking about in his sermon this morning?" This is but one of 10 potential problems pastors should consider before they undertake the important ministry of pastoral counseling.

24 **Renewal in rural ministry**
The small membership/rural church is the bedrock of the Church of the Brethren, according to James L. Kinsey, who reviews a helpful new book on ways to understand and revive the small church. Photographs with the article are of Antelope Valley Church of the Brethren, a dynamic and growing small congregation near Billings, Okla.

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From the Publisher

On April 20, violence closer to home took over the newspapers and television screens, which previously had been dominated by NATO bombing of Yugoslavia. While we all had been mightily moved by the reports of suffering and inhumanity an ocean away, the massacre in Littleton, Colo., had our undivided attention. This event took place in our collective backyard.

One of the high schools in Elgin actually does come up to my own backyard, underscoring the realization that many in the nation felt: This could have happened to us. In my family, we talked to our school-age children about all the issues that seemed from the first news reports to be related to the tragedy: guns, white supremacism, the culture's elevation of sports heroes, violent video games and movies, troubled youth. We couldn't answer the question of why the two boys became killers. And we couldn't assure our children that it could never happen in their schools. Clearly, being a kid nowadays means being aware of the overwhelming depravity in the world.

It was easy to say, "See, this is why we won't let you play violent video games" (though we were quick to add that playing such games doesn't cause most kids to shoot somebody). But what more does it mean to be a member of one of the historic peace churches? In the midst of this war in the Balkans and then again in the face of yet another outbreak of school violence, what contribution can a peace church give? What do we make of the violence surrounding us on all sides?

Is there some new role for the Brethren? We tend to think peacemaking means nonresistance, conscientious objection to serving in the military, marching for peace, writing letters to governmental officials. . . . But in a frightening world where children blow up their classmates, peacemaking may look a lot like doing social work, providing pastoral care, uncovering racism, critiquing the media and the culture—maybe even changing the culture.

I didn't expect to hear a profound peace statement on TV, but I heard one on Oprah Winfrey's show the night after the shootings. One of her guests, Gerry Spence, described eloquently how children reflect the culture in which they live, and listed the ways they are barraged with violence. President Clinton lamented that these boys knew no other way than violence to solve their problems, Spence commented, yet night after night we had watched the US bombing away at a problem in Yugoslavia.

Then Oprah Winfrey turned to the camera and quoted William Stafford, a poet whom the Brethren have been proud to claim through his connection through Civilian Public Service. While she probably was reading from a different book, the poem she quoted also appears in *A Scripture of Leaves* (published by Brethren Press and soon to be reissued in a new edition):

> *For it is important that awake people be awake,*
> *or a breaking line may discourage them back to sleep;*
> *the signals we give—yes or no, or maybe—*
> *should be clear: the darkness around us is deep.*

Let us be truly awake, so that we may banish the nightmares of our children—those here and those in other cultures of violence around the world.

Wendy McFadden

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Peace Memorial Garden is a place of quiet rest

Along one side is a busy street. Along another is a drive to the parking lot past the entrance to the handicapped accessible entrance to the church. Still, in the midst of cars and people, "there is a place of quiet rest." It is called the Peace Memorial Garden. At the entrance stands the familiar peace pole with the words, "May Peace Prevail on Earth," in eight languages. The area is an oasis of beauty and calm in the shadow of the church sanctuary. A place with benches on which to sit, look at the flowers, listen to the birds. A place where many come to reflect and pray. A place for the cremated remains of loved ones to be laid to rest.

Rural churches often have large cemeteries. Town and city churches do not all have that luxury of space. But a memorial garden is a possibility for many. The church which can be a source of comfort during life becomes a sanctuary in death.

Susan E. Grubb, *Lancaster Newspapers*

Peace Memorial Garden *at the Elizabethtown (Pa.) Church of the Brethren was designed by members of the church, Jeff Eisenbise, left, and his father, Eugene Eisenbise.*

The Elizabethtown Church of the Brethren set aside an area roughly 100 by 120 feet. On the side near the street are dense rows of fir trees. A low stone wall with massive rocks brought from nearby farms defines the terraced levels, which are covered now with flowers and trees. What had been a plain grassy plot has been transformed into a garden of beauty. A brick walkway at the base of the garden of shrubs and flowers and a picket fence help to define the area.

For some time the idea had been thought a possibility as Sunday school classes talked of death and dying. The proposal was brought before the executive committee, and a Memorial Garden Committee was named to explore all options. Louise Baugher Black, a longtime advocate, was named the first chair for the committee. The concept of a church-sponsored garden for the cremated remains of members and their immediate families took hold. Interviews followed with representatives of congregations with church-side interment grounds. This was followed by visiting a variety of memorial gardens in Lancaster and nearby areas. *(continued on page 4)*

(continued from page 3)

Legal ramifications for the church were examined by the church's attorney. The borough manager approved the plans after studying the rules and procedures set by the committee. Next came the endorsement by the church board and church council. Finally, all was in place for the physical work to begin.

While some churches hire architects to plan and design their gardens, the Elizabethtown church called on two members, a father-son team. Eugene and Jeff Eisenbise served as project supervisors, job foremen, and landscape engineers. Excavation was handled by Ryan Kopp, another member, who had large earth-moving equipment. Other members helped with plantings.

Remains are interred in biodegradable containers. No markers are placed in the garden, nor are records of interment location kept. But a brass plaque mounted on the wall inside the side entrance, which has been named Memorial Lobby, contains the name and birth and death dates of each person interred in the garden. A memory book is kept near the plaque. Each interment will have a page for the family to record whatever they wish about the deceased.

Roger Killian, current chair of the committee, said the church has received 22 applications from members of the congregation who wish to be interred in the garden. Others are giving it consideration.

People look to the church in time of births, marriage, sickness and health, and the various stages of life. Now the church can provide nearby a final resting place in the time of death.
—Wayne Zunkel

Roy Howes, *at his retiremen party in January.*

Howes breaks a record for public service

The longest-serving county commissioner in Michigan's history is Roy Howes a member of the Marilla Church of the Brethren, Copemish, Mich. He was recognized on his retirement from the board last year by Michigan Gov. Joh Engler for his 45-plus year of service to Manistee County. Many others

Ohioan recalls days as a sea-going cowboy

Dean Rohrer, *left, with two of his shipmates.*

In the spring of 1945 men from the Church of the Brethren headquarters in Elgin, Ill., came to Manchester College to ask for volunteers. They wanted "sea-going cowboys" to assist with the delivery of horses to Europe.

The war had been devastating to livestock all over Europe, so the United Nations shipped thousands of horses to ports across Europe, and Brethren volunteers were needed to care for them on the journey.

Dean Rohrer, now a resident of Chestnut Village at the Brethren's Home Retirement Community in Greenville, Ohio, volunteered. He and 11 fellow Manchester students accompanied 600 horses to Greece. Caring for the horses was a 24-hour-a-day job for the entire three-week trip. But the next summer Rohrer and his fellow volunteers helped to transport another 600 horses to Poland.

"This changed all of us Midwestern boys and opened us up to what the world really was," Rohrer says. "We were all Church of the Brethren, and this launched for some of us the spirit of Brethren service, of truly wanting to help others around the world instead of just those in our own backyard."—Mike Wernick offered words of appreciation as well, including one who served with him in county government who said: “Through his civility and patience, Roy won the respect of county commissioners of both political parties and made doing the county’s business a pleasure.” Howes, 86, has been a faithful member of the Marilla congregation for 78 years.

Elizabethtown College begins centennial

Elizabethtown (Pa.) College’s 14-month centennial celebration began April 17 with its grand kickoff. Three days of events led up to that day, including an April 14 program highlighting 100 years of E-town stories and pictures. An extensive listing of all centennial events over the 14-months is posted at http://www 2.etown.edu/centennial/ homepage.shtml. Or call 717-361-1410.

Conestoga marks 275th anniversary

Conestoga Church of the Brethren, Leola, Pa., this year is celebrating its 275th anniversary. Services throughout the year will feature special music and special guests. The congregation’s anniversary celebration is scheduled for the Nov. 13 weekend. For more information, contact John Hershey at jwhershey@yahoo.com.

Bridgewater College receives major gifts

Bridgewater College has moved a step closer to constructing its new $3.5 million health and wellness center with a second $1 million donation from Fred Funkhouser. Earlier this year, Funkhouser, a retired Shenandoah Valley banker, donated $1 million to initiate the campaign. The new center will be named the Fred O. and Virginia C. Funkhouser Center for Health and Wellness, in honor of Funkhouser and his late wife, Virginia.

Dr. Richard Howells *(in cap) extracts a tooth with help from a "flashlight holder" and a "head holder" at the Las Rayas clinic in Honduras.*

Pennsylvania dentist helps in Honduras

A favorite expression for something of real difficulty is that “it’s like pulling teeth.” From March 5 to 15 this year, Dr. Richard Howells, a member of Memorial Church of the Brethren in Martinsburg, Pa., found out how hard, but how rewarding, pulling teeth can be.

He was part of a group of 55 volunteers to go to aid Honduras, sponsored by the Johnstown, Pa., chapter of the interdenominational organization Pro Papa Missions America.

Howells pulled teeth all day in the village of Las Rayas, reached by an eight-hour trip over winding mountain roads in an old school bus. Both the bus and food and lodging for the volunteers were arranged by Chet Thomas, a Church of the Brethren member who went to Honduras 20 years ago and founded Project Global Village, which he serves as executive director.

Patients, dressed in their best clothes for the occasion, would begin lining up early and could number about 100 before the clinic opened.

When he reported back to his home congregation, Dr. Howells helped connect the hemispheres and reminded us that our work and our worship are one.—Jean P. Harshbarger

"In Touch" profiles Brethren we would like you to meet. Send story ideas and photos to "In Touch," Messenger, *1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120.*

News

US Brethren team visits India for work on reconciliation

A team from the United States visited former Brethren mission churches in India March 19-31. Led by the General Board's director for Global Mission Partnerships, Mervin Keeney, the group also included Shantilal Bhagat, GMP staff consultant, and Bob Gross, coordinator for the Ministry of Reconciliation. Their visit was to lay the foundation for a hoped-for joint meeting between the Church of North India and Brethren who have separated from the union.

Bob Gross

The Vyara congregation *celebrates a festive Palm Sunday.*

Churches begun by the Church of the Brethren, which started mission to India in 1894, united with the Church of North India (CNI) in 1970 as a part of an indigenization strategy. But some members began withdrawing from the union as early as 1978. Continued tensions have diverted the energies of both groups from fully pursuing God's mission and continue to divide the body of Christ in an increasingly difficult Hindu context.

Annual Conference last spoke on the situation in India in a 1988 action. Recommendations in the 1988 statement included encouragement for General Board staff to facilitate cooperative ministry and reconciliation between the groups.

The delegation visited the CNI leadership at Ahmedabad, including the Bishop of Gujarat diocese, the CNI general secretary, and CNI pastors from south Gujarat. They met with persons interested in property trust issues. They also visited CNI congregations at Vyara, Ankleshvar, and Valsad (Bulsar).

Later they met with the Bishop of Mumbai (Bombay) diocese regarding outstanding property trust matters in his diocese. CNI's key interest is to maintain the unity of the church.

The three visited with seven Brethren congregations and six outreach centers (some established since 1978) in the Valsad and Vyara areas, and briefly visited three high schools run by the churches. They met with leadership and trustees of the existing property trusts.

This was the first official contact by representatives of the Church of the Brethren with Brethren congregations since the time of separation. Receiving recognition by the American church as a part of the global Church of the Brethren was the primary concern of Brethren.

The group also visited the Dangs area, where there has been religious persecution recently, and shared words of encouragement.

Keeney summarized the meetings this way: "We worshiped, brought greetings, and enjoyed gracious hospitality. We heard a variety of perspectives and recommendations regarding unresolved issues. The trip renewed the Church of the Brethren connection with the church in India, and began to explore ecclesiastical, historical, and legal issues toward possible ways forward. While we recognize that the solution must be found by the churches in India, the Church of the Brethren, as the 'mother church,' can be a catalyst. A number of contemporary factors prompt hope for movement now on these difficult, interrelated issues."

Keeney said the next step, a joint meeting bringing the two groups together, is projected in the coming six months.

Church calls for end to NATO bombing; aids relief effort

In an open letter to President Clinton, Judy Mills Reimer, executive director of the Church of the Brethren General Board, on March 31 asked the United States to help halt the bombing in Yugoslavia.

"In the midst of this terrible situation, I am led by the teachings of the Bible, by the traditions of our church, and by the stark reality that violence only begets violence, to call on you to stop the bombing of Yugoslavia," Reimer wrote.

She added, "The intentions of the United States and its allies may have been noble in seeking to protect the rights of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo. However, in allowing for only two options — to condone ethnic cleansing or to seek a military solution — we have created a no-win situation where ultimately the very people we have sought to protect are being further endangered."

Reimer said a return of international peace monitors coupled with OSCE- or United Nations-led negotiations between the Yugoslavian government and the Kosovar Albanians is what is needed at this time. In addition, Reimer called for the United States to support voices for peace within Yugoslavia, while holding leaders from every quarter responsible for crimes against humanity, and in particular the crimes of the Milosevic regime against the people of Kosovo.

"The world desperately needs new and creative approaches to situations like this, which will doubtless continue to be a part of our world as we enter the next millennium," Reimer said. "The United States can take the lead in helping fashion these new responses to the age-old problems of the human family."

She concluded, "Our denomination will be in prayer for the victims of the conflict and for the leaders of the nations involved. We have also begun to provide humanitarian assistance for those displaced by the conflict. May God grant you the strength and vision to act for peace in this troubling situation."

An initial $40,000 was pledged early in April toward a Church World Service appeal by the Church of the Brethren General Board for humanitarian assistance in Yugoslavia, then on April 20 another $100,000 was added as the dimensions of the tragedy became apparent (see box).

The General Board's Emergency Response/Service Ministries also anticipates sending thousands of care kits to refugee centers. Assembled baby kits, clean-up kits, and

Church of the Brethren gives $140,000 for relief aid

The Church of the Brethren has announced grants totaling $140,000 from the Emergency Disaster Fund to assist Church World Service in providing essential items to Kosovar refugees. The funds will be used to purchase needed supplies in Europe, the fastest and most efficient way to get them to the refugees.

"We are learning more and more about the plight of mothers and little children," said Marianne Pittman, interim co-manager of Emergency Response/Service Ministries. "Part of this grant will be used to get baby formula there quickly."

Donations are needed to replenish the Emergency Disaster Fund in the face of anticipated additional grants to meet needs in Europe, as well as to continue disaster relief efforts in Latin America and the Caribbean. Donations may be sent to Emergency Disaster Fund, Church of the Brethren General Board, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120.

health kits can be sent to the New Windsor Service Center (601 Main Street, New Windsor, MD 21776). For a description of the contents of the kits, contact Jane Bankert at 410-635-8797.

The General Board is encouraging Brethren and others to communicate their concerns about the Yugoslavia situation to the US government . Vigils or other forms of protest are encouraged to be carried out in public places.

Brethren Volunteer Service has had volunteers in the Balkans since 1992, working toward longer-term solutions to the conflict there.Their work has been in the areas of peace and justice, human rights, youth, and women's organizations.

"NATO attacks are one of the worst things that could have been done in this situation," according to one current volunteer in the region. "The bombing campaign has effectively squashed all opposition to Milosevic within Yugoslavia, escalated the pace of ethnic cleansing, and caused even opponents of the regime to rally in support of the Yugoslav government."

According to BVS director Dan McFadden, there are no BVSers in immediate danger, but the BVS office is monitoring the situation closely.

Brethren eyeglasses provide restored vision in El Salvador

A poignant, memorable moment at last year's National Youth Conference came during one worship service when thousands of participants donated 4,700 outdated eyeglasses that would be cleaned, itemized, and sent to Central America for reuse.

A subsequent collection campaign brought in about 2,000 additional pairs. Bill Brinker, a physician for an Ohio-based agency that provides eye care "for the underserved," in February traveled with a team to El Salvador. There they cared for over 5,600 patients and performed over 150 operations. More than 4,800 pairs of glasses were prescribed, many of them from the two Brethren collections.

In a letter to Chris Douglas, coordinator of Youth/Young Adult Ministries for the Church of the Brethren General Board, Brinker said he'd welcome Brethren eye care physicians or general helpers on his next trip.

"If you collect any more glasses please remember us because we never have enough," Brinker added. Contact Douglas at 800-323-8039 or cdouglas_gb@brethren.org.

Manchester graduation pledge spreads nationwide

As college seniors across the nation contemplate life after graduation, for some the hunt for a job will mean searching for companies or organizations that are environmentally sensitive, don't discriminate, and create a friendly work atmosphere. These are students who support the Graduation Pledge Alliance, a nationwide effort that has been based at Manchester College, North Manchester, Ind.

This voluntary pledge states: "I pledge to explore and take into account the social and environmental consequences of any job I consider or any organization for which I work."

About 60 percent of Manchester's graduates have taken the pledge since 1988, wearing green ribbons during commencement as a show of support. Manchester College supporters also receive a wallet-size card and a certificate.

Other schools that have expressed support for the pledge include Barry University, Bethany Theological Seminary, Denison University, Earlham College, Georgia College, Georgia College and State University, Goshen College, Humboldt State University, Indiana University, Purdue University-Fort Wayne, Luther College, Madonna University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Olivet College, University of Kansas, University of Maryland, University College, University of Notre Dame, University of Oregon, and Whitman College.

National Council trains black family parenting consultants

In March the National Council of Churches concluded its first step at trying to strengthen black families for the new millennium as it "graduated" 25 Black Family Parenting consultants in Atlanta. The first training segment for this group was in February in Atlanta. The training drew on faith resources and on the history and strengths of the black family.

These consultants are committed to recruiting at least two churches to provide at least two Parenting Seminars apiece during the coming year. Meanwhile, a second group of 25 consultants will train in May and June in Nashville.

The Effective Black Parenting initiative is made possible by a $134,760 grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. It is being conducted by the NCC's Office of Family Ministries and Human Sexuality in cooperation with 10 denominations, including historic African American churches and other denominations with significant African American memberships.

La Verne church presents opera by Brethren composer

St. Judas Passion, a contemporary opera that explores the relationship between Jesus and Judas, was presented in a condensed concert version March 28 at La Verne (Calif.) Church of the Brethren. The performance, attended by over 800 people, was sponsored by six La Verne/San Dimas community churches.

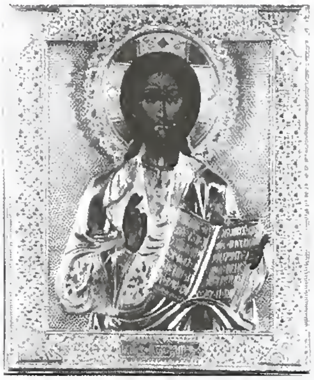
The three-act opera was composed by Steve Engle in 1972 in three weeks, after he was denied permission to produce *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Engle, now minister of music at Stone Church of the Brethren, Huntingdon, Pa., was the music director of the La Verne church from 1973 until 1986. Engle returned to La Verne to direct the March performance that included soloists, a choir, and a 28-piece orchestra.

SIMPLE TREASURES

A pipe organ 300 years old, one of the oldest playable organs in North America. The first Brethren hymnbook, 1720. An 1833 New Testament handed down by the parents of Sarah Righter Major, the first Brethren woman preacher. Souvenir glasses, baggage tags, meal tickets: mementos of Annual Meetings a century ago. A spiritual icon, a gift to the Brethren from the Russian Orthodox Church at the height of the 1960s cold war.

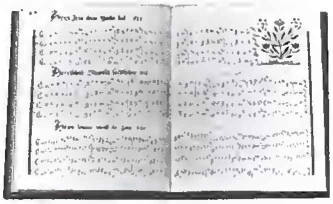
These are treasures of your church, heirlooms of a pilgrim people. Treasures that span three centuries of the Brethren journey. Simple treasures that tell profound stories.

And there's more. Alexander Mack Sr.'s hymn "Count Well the Cost." A hundred hymns penned in prison by the Solingen Brethren. The deed to the Germantown property bearing the signature of Alexander Mack Jr. The tombstone of Christopher Sauer. A letter by Civil War circuit rider John Kline. The largest book printed in the American colonies.



These memorabilia await you in the Brethren Historical Library and Archives. A collection of research documents and geneological leads, but more than that: A place where the Brethren story comes alive.

Come visit us during the General Offices Open House June 27-28, noon to 4 p.m., and June 29, 10 a.m. till noon. Come, see, hear, and be touched anew by the Brethren story.



Brethren Historical Library and Archives

Church of the Brethren General Offices, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120

Resources and Opportunities

The Four Horsemen of the Apocolypse *from a 14th-century woodcut.*

The living end—A conference on eschatology

A national conference on apocalypticism and millennialism will be held at Bluffton (Ohio) College Aug. 8-10. "Apocalypticism and Millennialism: Shaping a Believer's Church Eschatology for the 21st Century" is one in a series of believers church conferences that were started by Don Durnbaugh, Church of the Brethren historian, and John Howard Yoder.

Keynote speakers will include Paul Boyer of the University of Wisconsin and author of *When Time Shall Be no More*, and James VanderKam of the University of Notre Dame, author of *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*. Previous conferences have dealt with the theological issues of particular interest to the broad believers church tradition, which includes the Church of the Brethren. Contact Loren Johns at johnsl@bluffton.edu or at 419-358-3280.

Organizing for peace in Kosovo

Sojourners has announced the availability of a new resource for Christians and others concerned about the growing violence in Serbia and Kosovo— "Christians In Solidarity with the People of Kosovo: A Kosovo Organizing Packet for the Churches."

This resource includes:

- How to organize a public witness or demonstration
- How to promote peace through a letter-writing campaign
- How to aid victims of war through church relief organizations
- How to incorporate prayers for Kosovo into worship
- Editorials on the conflict in Kosovo and a Balkan primer for educating people on the region.

"Christians around the country are asking for ways to stop the war in Serbia and for ways to help the victims of Milosevic and NATO's violence," says Rose Marie Berger, assistant editor at *Sojourners*. "This organizing packet gives churches tools for action."

The packet is available through the *Sojourners* Web site at www.sojourners.com or by calling *Sojourners* at 800-714-7474.

Preaching, plumbing, and bivocational ministry

Preaching, Planning, and Plumbing: The Implications of Bivocational Ministry for the Church and for You, written by Steve Clapp, Ron Finney, and Angela Zimmerman, is now available from Brethren Press. This 128-page book, jointly published by Christian Community and the Brethren Academy, will guide clergy and lay people who are seeking to better understand their spiritual gifts and the ministries to which they have been called. Included are a spiritual gifts assessment and a guide to discerning God's call to ministry in the church and in secular work. A 13-week discussion guide is included. Cost is $11.00. Write brethren_press_gb@brethren.org. or call 800-441-3712.

Getting the full story of Civilian Public Service

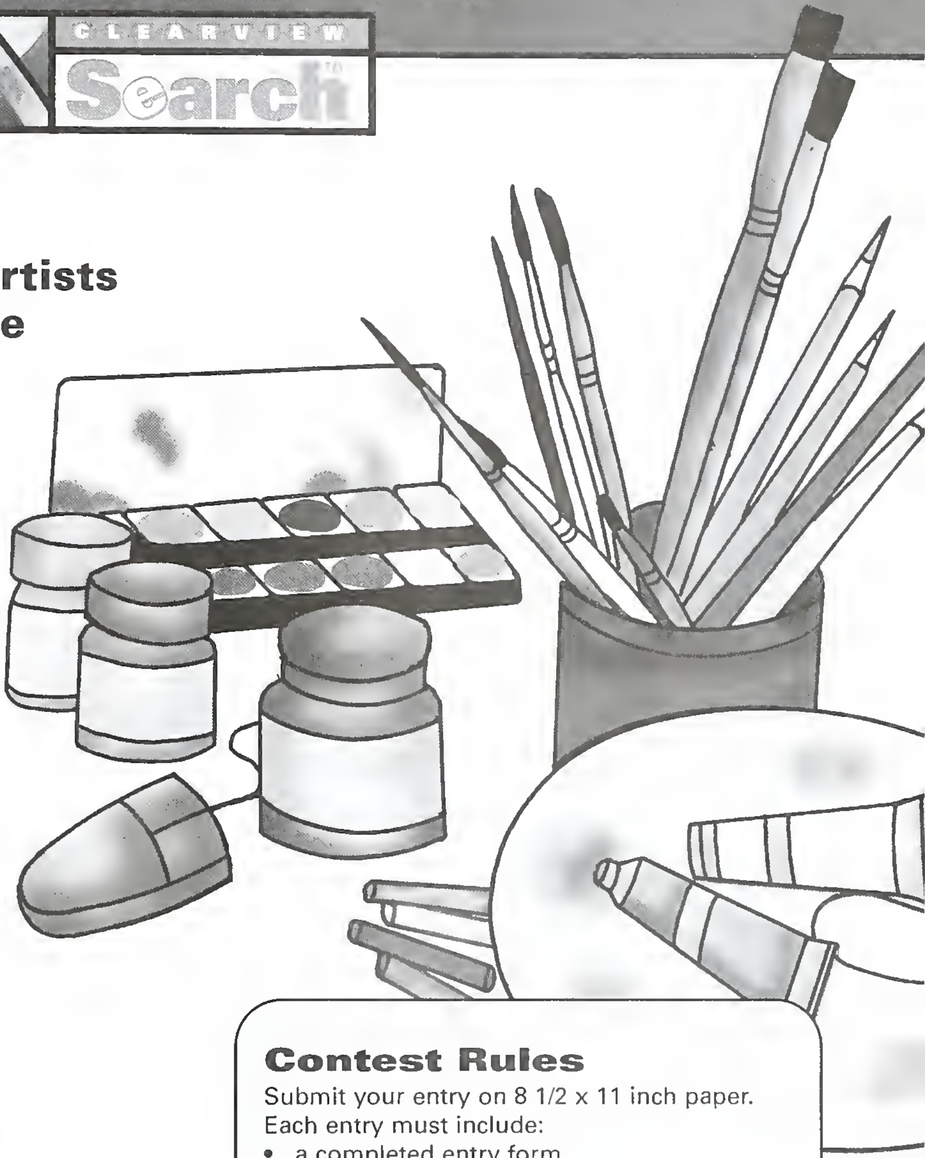
A video and four books about Civilian Public Service and peacemakers are available from National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors (NISBCO). The CPS documentary video covers 1943-1945. Books include a directory of all CPS participants; *Exercise of Conscience*, which details the CPS experience; *Peace Was in Their Hearts*, a comprehensive narrative distilled from questionnaires filled out by CPSers 50 years ago; *The Turning Point*, which describes "how men of conscience brought major change in the care of America's mentally ill"; and *To the Beat of a Different Drummer*, which focuses on the maturation of a World War II conscientious objector as seen through letters, home stories, and world events.

Write nisbco@igc.apc.org or call 202-483-2220.

Design a new mascot for ClearViewSearch™

A contest for Church of the Brethren artists 7th grade through college

We need your help to design a friendly mascot that will help fun-loving Web surfers, young and old, to navigate the Internet while using ClearViewSearch.



Win a computer for yourself and a year's free Internet access for your church

Learn more about our unique search engine. Log on to **www.clearviewsearch.com** and join the fun.

The only search engine to be used on *ClearViewNet*™, the new Internet portal developed by Church of the Brethren Benefit Trust, *ClearViewSearch* helps individuals of all ages to surf the Internet without being bombarded by offensive content.

Entries will be judged by age group. Winning entries will be selected on originality and how well the mascot represents ClearViewSearch.

The winner from each age group will win an official ClearViewNet T-shirt. The grand prize winner from among all age groups will win a computer. The winner's church will be awarded one year's free Internet access service from ClearViewNet.

ClearViewSearch reserves the right to edit the winning entry for use on the Internet.

Contest Rules

Submit your entry on 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper. Each entry must include:

- a completed entry form
- a drawing of the mascot in color
- the mascot's name
- one or more paragraphs describing why your mascot would be a good companion for kids surfing the World Wide Web.

The mascot can be an animal, a person, or a thing (real or imagined) in action anything from hiking up a mountain to surfing the Web.

For an entry blank or more information, ask your pastor or call 800-250-5757. The deadline for entries is June 1, 1999.

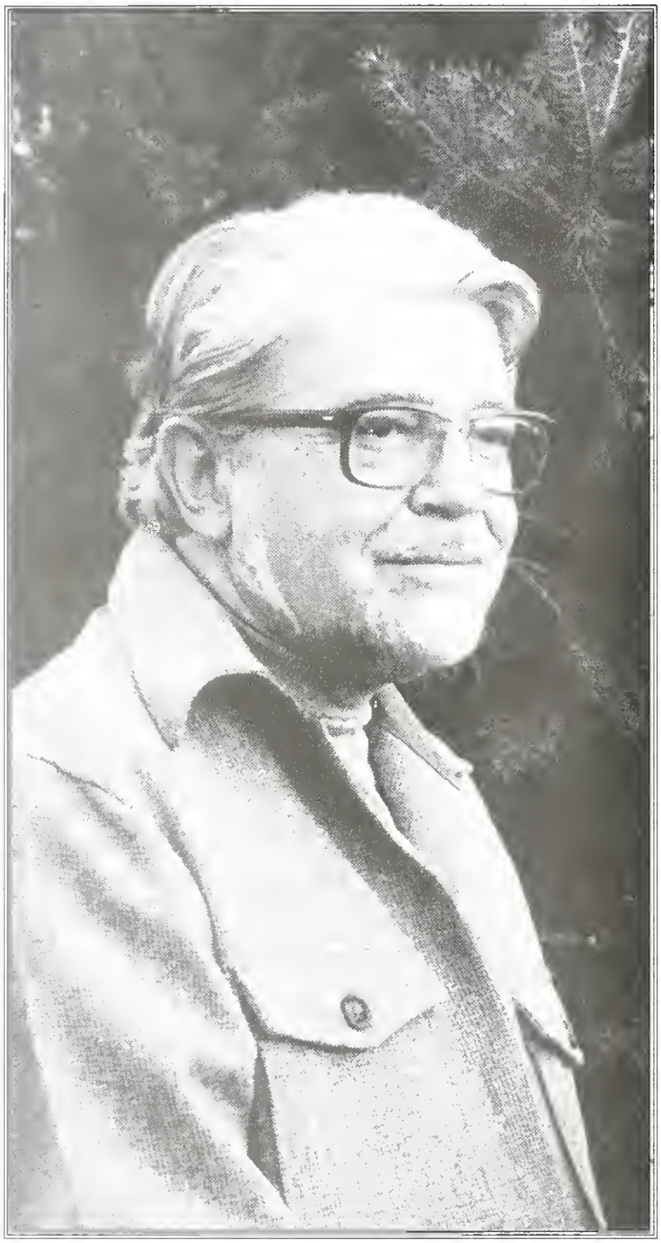
Send to:
Mascot Contest
1505 Dundee Avenue
Elgin, Illinois 60120

Developed by Church of the Brethren Benefit Trust for individuals of all ages and faith communities.

Grace to touch the dream

The luminous life of Ken Morse

BY HOWARD E. ROYER


Hermon Thomasson

O grant us grace to reach, to give,

To touch the dream by which we live.

—Hymnal: A Worship Book, #130

Kenneth I. Morse was a journalist, an editor, a poet, a hymnwriter, a storyteller. But he was something more to the Church of the Brethren than any or all of these roles. For half a century he was its spiritual mentor.

How better to move the church family than to write the songs that inspire, define, and energize its members. How better to illumine the human and social dilemmas of the day than by mining the richness of biblical treasure. How better to keep alive the vision of faith—personal and corporate—than by glorifying God and seeking "grace to reach, to give / to touch the dream by which we live."

Writing was Ken's primary vocation, his primary passion. Yet, much as he loved the printed word, what elated him most was to see the words he had written leap off the page into song, into such hymns as "Move in Our Midst," "For We Are Strangers No More," "Brothers and Sisters of Mine," and translation of the French text, "Praise, I Will Praise You, Lord."

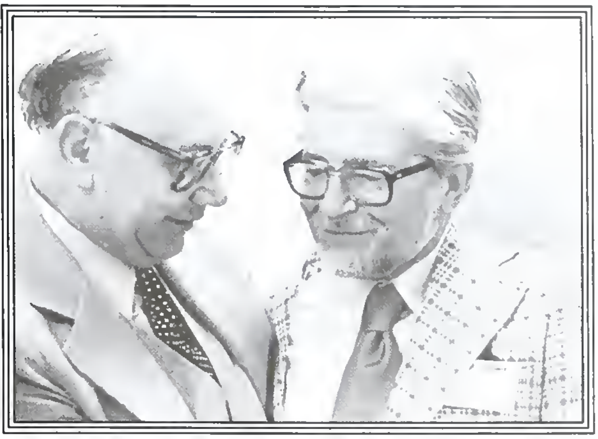
In recent years, even in recent weeks, Ken's wife, Marjorie, would give me a call and say, "Ken wants to send you some of his writings." Sometimes they were forthcoming but of late, more often not. What was clear was Ken's incessant drive, up to the last, to give voice to what was in his head and heart and soul.

Wheelchair-bound in his 80s and experiencing Parkinson's disease, increasing deafness and barely audible speech, Ken persisted to craft the art of storytelling. One outcome is the Brethren Press work *Preaching in a Tavern and 129 Other Surprising Stories from Brethren Life*, published in 1997.

In the usual order of things, journalists are rarely poets and poets rarely journalists. The journalist is concerned with events, history, facts; the poet, with feelings. But for Ken these were not opposites in discourse. He masterfully brought *knowing* and *feeling* together.

An ordained minister, Ken studied at Juniata College, Princeton University, Penn State University, and Bethany Theological Seminary. Juniata College conferred an honorary doctorate on Ken in 1951, at the outset of his MESSENGER years. His career with the Church of the Brethren nationally was, loosely speaking, in multiples of seven—seven years youth editor, 21 years MESSENGER editor; seven years book editor; seven or so retirement years a part-time volunteer:

The Morses *in the early 1960s (from the front): Mary, Ken, Marjorie, Betsy, Paul, Steven, David.*



MESSENGER files

Paul M. Robinson, *Ken Morse in 1978, recalling years together at Juniata and Princeton.*

altogether 43 years of service to the General Board and denomination.

In the 1960s MESSENGER's editorials and articles rankled some readers, as documented by a file of letters Ken passed on to me when he left the MESSENGER editorship in 1971. There were threats and calls for his resignation over the use of Martin Luther King Jr.'s picture on the cover. There were strident notes and canceled subscriptions over coverage of situation ethics, draft card burning, gun control, inclusive language, the Russian Orthodox Church, Vietnam, and ecumenicity. Ken learned firsthand that not all the blood that flows through Brethren veins is tranquil.

He was an avid scholar in hymnology and history—Brethren and ecumenical. He researched Brethren beginnings in Europe and spent a five-month leave there touching base with Catholic, Orthodox, Taize, and Waldensian communities as well as lay academies and industrial missions. He is the only Brethren to have served on both the 1951 and 1992 hymnal committees.

In the workplace Ken had a way of affirming what was deepest in others, igniting the spark, the hope that was within them. He had fruitful engagement with many of his peers, but surely one of the most dynamic was with Wilbur Brumbaugh. Ken and Wilbur collaborated on projects for the magazine and curriculum, on art and music, and on heritage and belief. One of their creations I cherish is a graphic about friendship. Wilbur used two abstract figures that seem to meld together in illustrating this verse of Ken's:

We walked together, you and I,
Wherever we wanted to walk
Without ever whispering a word.
Yet your heart I heard,
and I caught you measuring my mind.
You and I . . .
We never will discover how
We understand in silence,
But we know why.

For a man in love with words, what respect for the place of silence!

In addressing the MESSENGER Dinner at the 1978 Annual Conference, Ken lifted up three visions he held for the periodical that he had seen through an astounding 928 issues:

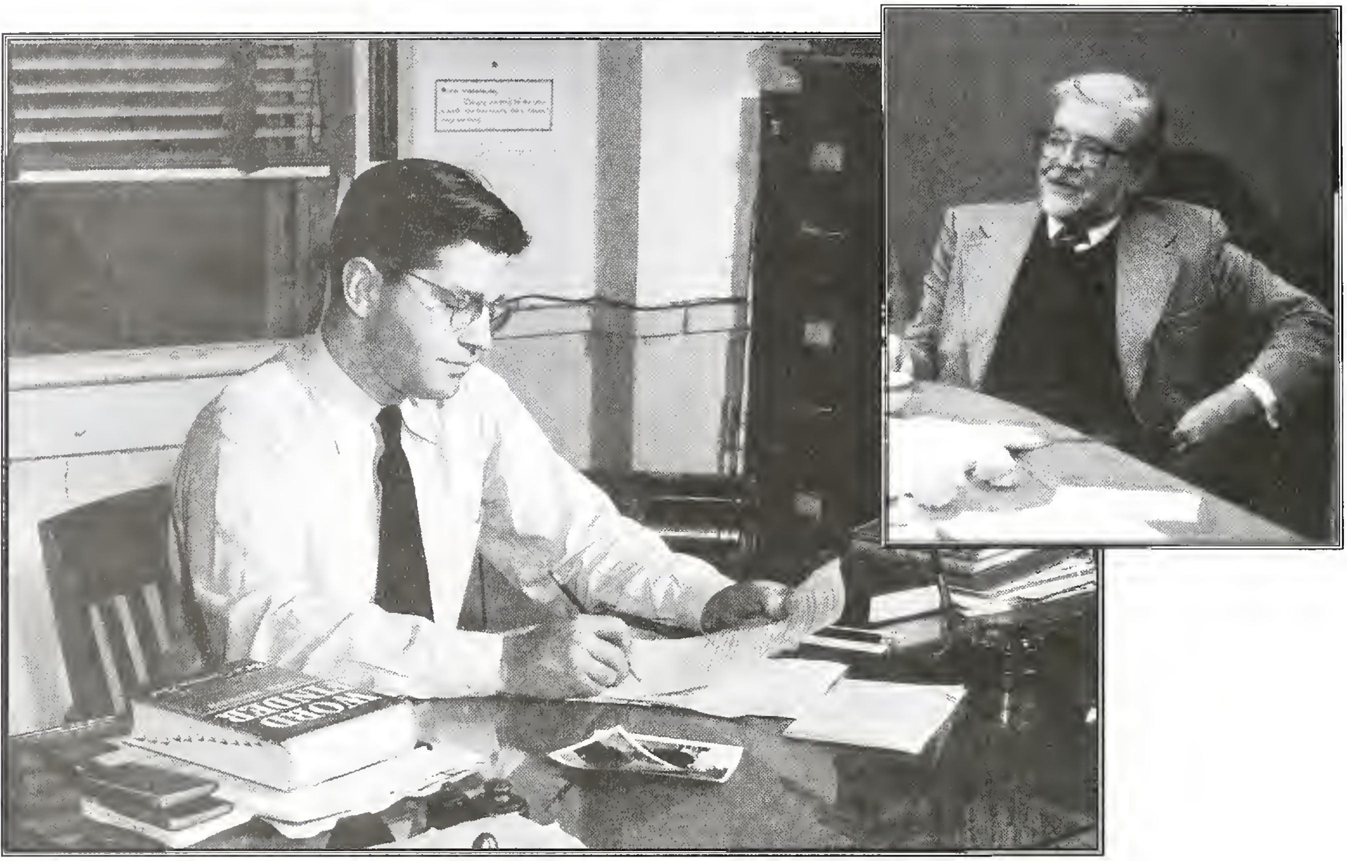
—that MESSENGER reveal the human side of the church, the Good News written on "the pages of the human heart,"
—that MESSENGER be prophetic in declaring the hard things that must be said about Christian discipleship, and
—that MESSENGER be a thing of beauty—"lovely to look at, delightful to hold"—giving special place to color, design, rhythm, poetry.

These were not visions that Ken held for MESSENGER alone. They were values and dreams he forged for family, congregation, and denomination as well.

Through study of hymnology Ken heralded the Old Testament roots of our faith. "Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug," he quoted from Isaiah 5:1. He studied the New Testament beginnings of the Christian church and its worship patterns. He probed how pietist and anabaptist streams both flow into the Brethren mode of worship. And he enumerated some things that have changed among the Brethren, the move from meetinghouse to sanctuary, from farmer preachers to professional ministers, from a cappella singing to accompanied singing, from spontaneous worship to printed order of service, and from extended family to a reach for wider community.

Likewise he identified cherished values that remain: hymn-making and hymn-singing, abiding respect for the Word, wide lay participation, celebration of community, and openness to new understanding.

Ken was particularly appreciative of the Brethren practice of the love feast and the contribution this brought to the wider church. Interestingly, in his book on worship he seemed moved by this ritual not



Henry Long

so much for its sacramental aspect as for the meaning it bestowed on daily existence:

> *One purpose of the feetwashing is to dignify every act of service and cleansing. One value of the Lord's Supper is to hallow every family meal. And some of the richest meaning of the communion are realized when a Christian's whole lifestyle becomes a witness to sacrificial giving.*
>
> —Move in Our Midst, *1997, p. 52*

With Ken's death coming over the Easter season as it did, many who know his work were reminded of his signature poem, "Listen to the Sunrise," and its use of scripture, imagery, language, and rhythm. One gem in the section on "Walking in the Resurrection" contains a line that stands almost as a self-portrait of Ken in his last few years:

> *He still endures mild crucifixions, but he*
> *spreads eternity wherever he walks. . . .*

Ken deeply loved the church and found joy in devoting his life to it. For the Church of the Brethren, he keenly anticipated its 300th anniversary in 2008 and even had sketched a rough blueprint for its commemoration. At the core was the task of restating and reaffirming the marks of the Brethren, based on the words and examples of Jesus.

Beyond writer and historian, editor and hymnist, storyteller and theologian, there was Ken the companion of Marge for 57 years, and Ken the father of five and grandfather of eight and great-grandfather of one, and Ken the friend and neighbor. In all facets he exuded a luminous quality, a testament to Brethren spirituality, a personification of the Hebrew word *hesed*—loving-kindness. Simplicity, compassion, and grace shone through him and from him.

Thanks be to God for Ken Morse, a mentor whose spiritual gifts will long move in our midst and kindle our hearts.

Howard Royer and Kenneth Morse were coworkers in General Board communication for 25 years. Each served as youth editor and MESSENGER *editor. Royer shared the essence of this article at Ken's memorial service on April 9 in North Manchester, Ind.*

MESSENGER files

Collaborators: *Perry Huffaker, composer, and Ken Morse, writer, of "Move in Our Midst."*

Hymn favorites by Ken Morse

Move in Our Midst

This widely loved hymn was introduced in *The Brethren Hymnal* in 1951. Kenneth Morse wrote the first two stanzas in 1941 at Camp Harmony in western Pennsylvania; the second two stanzas were commissioned several years later when the song was chosen for the 1951 hymnal.

The tune Pine Glen was named for the church where Perry Huffaker was pastor at the time. Since its introduction to the Mennonites in the 1992 *Hymnal*, the song has become a growing favorite in that community. It is also heralded in many other ecumenical settings.

For We Are Strangers No More

Both the hymn and its music were written for a slide presentation of the World Ministries Commission in the 1970s. Dianne Huffman Morningstar was invited by Ken Morse to provide the musical setting. Her goal, she writes, was "to celebrate the joy of unity and oneness not only among our brothers and sisters in the Church of the Brethren, but throughout a far-reaching, singing community."

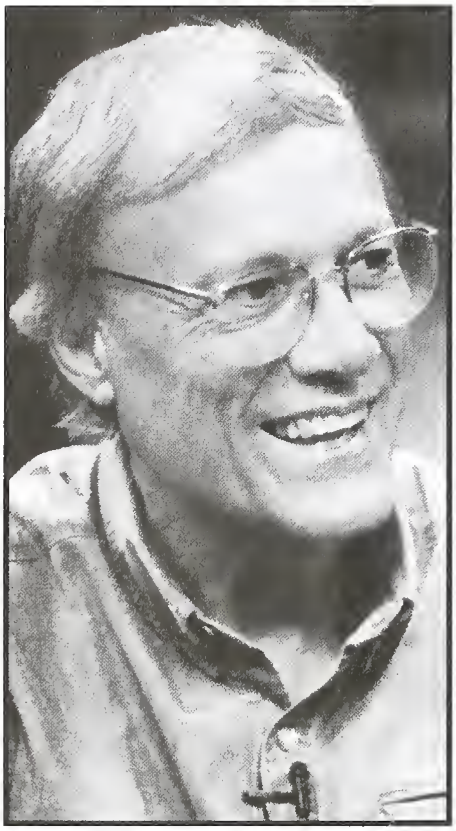
Brothers and Sisters of Mine

This text was written in the 1970s when Ken Morse was book editor for Brethren Press. The straightforward, unison melody by Wilbur E. Brumbaugh complements the text's unadorned admission of complacency. The song underscores the Church of the Brethren history of compassion and service.

Praise, I Will Praise You, Lord

This simple yet moving song was introduced to *Hymnal: A Worship Book* by the Plow Creek Mennonite Community, Tiskilwa, Ill. Ken Morse, a member of the text committee, provided the translation. The song was written in the high Alps during a tour by the Troubadours of Hope in 1975. Claude Fraysse created it as a devotional based on Psalm 9:1-2, and the group adopted it as an expression of praise. Very quickly churches throughout Europe began singing the hymn and it has since been translated into many languages.

—Adapted from *Hymnal Companion*, © 1996 by Brethren Press, Faith & Life Press, and Mennonite Publishing House.



A theologian on Kosovo

What is the response of nonviolence?

F&W

Fletcher
Farrar

Walter
Wink

Walter Wink is a renowned theologian and biblical scholar, and a leading theological voice for the cause of nonviolence. He lives in Sandisfield, Mass., and is professor of biblical interpretation at Auburn Theological Seminary in New York City. His most recent book, *The Powers That Be: Theology for a New Millennium* (Doubleday, 1998), explodes the myth that violence can be redemptive.

After NATO bombs began falling in the former Yugoslavia, MESSENGER asked Wink, as an advocate of nonviolence, to be interviewed on his perspective. Somewhat reluctantly, he agreed. The interview, by Fletcher Farrar, took place on April 10, the 17th day of the bombing campaign.

F What is the Christian response, the nonviolent response, to the tragedy that is unfolding in Yugoslavia?

W

One of the facts we have to face in the whole history of Yugoslavian conflicts, going back to the trouble in Croatia and in Bosnia, is that nonviolence has not shown itself to be a very effective means of stopping the conflicts once they've begun.

A group of leaders from all the different nondenominational peace groups got together early in the Bosnia conflict and tried to come up with some strategies that might work in that area, such as interposition, or putting people between the combatants. So some efforts were made in that direction, but they were colossal failures. So the first thing that has to be said is that we have not done a good job at all in trying to figure out how to make nonviolence effective in areas like Yugoslavia.

That is not to say that nonviolence is not effective. It has been extraordinarily effective in a number of conflicts in the last couple of decades. In fact it has been the most effective thing on the face of the globe. But there are places where it doesn't work. So we have to acknowledge that it doesn't always work. It's not magical in its capacities for success. It does have a higher success rate than violence, which can never be higher than 50 percent, because someone always has to lose. But we're not doing so well on this conflict.

F Does that mean we didn't do it well enough?

W

Some situations are just tragic, especially once violence has become the means which people look to and trust to extricate them from the situation.

F And then what? Once violence starts, violence is the only way?

W

No, violence has clearly not been the way in Kosovo. In the period from 1995 to 1997 the number of casualties had been quite low. The Serbian government killed 14 people and the guerrillas killed 28. So there was a very low level of hostilities at that point. What happened is that the US government has entered into this conflict without understanding the historical situation. We have sided with the guerrillas, even though the guerrillas moved away from a nonviolent strategy which was working in some ways effectively in Kosovo, though certainly not effectively enough.

The guerrillas initiated acts of violence, some against their own people, because they thought they were collaborators. So these guerrillas were no better than Milosevic and his crew. But the US government decided to side with the guerrillas and launch the air war, using threats against Milosevic which failed to cow him. And now we don't seem to have any idea what our goals are. We have lost Kosovo, it appears. There are hundreds of thousands of refugees in the surrounding areas, with no future, no possibility of returning, cities burned and gutted. It looks as if we couldn't have chosen a worse path than the one we have chosen.

F Isn't part of the failure of US policy the fact that an air war is the only politically acceptable way to intervene here?

W

From Vietnam and studies of WWII bombing, it is clear that bombing very seldom has made the people who are targeted back down or capitulate. More often it has strengthened people's resolve as they see indiscriminate death raining down from the sky.

F Yet that's becoming US policy, to bomb everywhere. What would be a better policy?

W

In a place like Yugoslavia, with a long history of conflict, I'm not sure. What is clear is that the scenes of what people are calling genocide did not happen until the guerrillas in Kosovo had mounted their offense and had succeeded in imposing themselves on large parts of Kosovo, so that the Serbian government sensed that they were losing control of the country altogether. What happened here is that Kosovo had previously had autonomy, which Milosevic had not honored. They had been severely repressed by Milosevic, no question about that. But it wasn't until these guerrillas in Kosovo mounted their aggression that the kind of vicious response by the Serbs took place. And the guerrillas in Kosovo had changed the demand from autonomy to independence. They themselves weren't able to agree on this and there was a split in the guerrilla movement itself.

It does appear that maybe this whole situation might have been dealt with better by leaving the people involved to deal with it themselves. As a country we would like to be able to intervene to help people who are being oppressed, but we don't sometimes understand the historical situation well enough to really know who is the oppressor and who is the oppressed.

F But it's almost impossible for the US to do nothing. Would it be possible for the US to organize a massive nonviolent intervention?

W

There was a considerable amount of nonviolent activity going on in Kosovo before the guerrillas put the situation on a totally different footing. In November of 1988 miners walked for five days from one city to another and back in a demonstration. In 1989 1,200 miners stayed deep underground in their shafts on a nine-day hunger strike to try to get reinstatement of provincial leaders. And there were mass gatherings under the slogan "For Democracy, Against Violence."

There have been Days of Sorrow after police killings, when for two-hour periods cars would honk and factory whistles would sound. There have been times for public silence, other times for switching off lights, and other times for banging pots and pans at the start of curfew, and other times for putting candles in the windows.

Most interesting was the attempt to create a parallel government that would operate despite Milosevic, who had closed the schools. This parallel government set up schools that met in homes and empty buildings. The teachers weren't even paid for quite a while. Later on they set up a system of voluntary taxation to pay for the teachers. And in 1997-98, student demonstrators, despite severe repression, succeeded in getting the universities reopened. The Kosovars really did use nonviolence.

But at a certain stage the feeling grew that it wasn't effective enough, that they were not achieving their goals, so the guerrillas launched their struggle. And that has turned out to be a tragic mistake.

F So this was a crucible of nonviolence. The international community could have supported those efforts instead of supporting the people who broke ranks and started violence.

W

The situation in Kosovo was ripe for nonviolent struggle for the simple reason that the Kosovars outnumbered the Serbs 9 to 1. Ninety percent of the Kosovars are Albanian. That meant they had the numbers to launch massive forms of nonviolent struggle, like a general strike, which might have made it impossible for the Serbs to govern the country and made the Serbs more amenable to some sort of compromise. We don't know if that would have worked or not. What we do know, with hindsight, is that the course that has been taken, which is the course of violence, has been absolutely catastrophic for Kosovo.

F It seems that when violence doesn't work, people get more violent.

W

The other thing that is noteworthy is how incredibly ineffective the military people have been in trying to carry out this violent response in Kosovo. They're running low on cruise missiles; they didn't seem to anticipate the need for Apache helicopters. It appears that they thought that merely rattling their swords would bring Milosevic to his knees. The mistake we keep making over and over and over again is the belief that because we have superior strength we can simply bully people into acquiescence to our desires. People don't operate that way. When they're bullied, they stand up, even if they have almost no chance of prevailing. It is part of human pride.

F What would have been the better course? Is doing nothing the only alternative to military intervention on the part of the United States?

W

(Pause.) Unfortunately there probably are situations where the wise thing to do is to do nothing. We have a very poor understanding of that part of the world. That has led us to miscalculations over and over again. The hardest thing in the world for Americans is to accept the idea that there is nothing we can do. A part of the illusion of our power is that we are possessed by the belief that we can prevail on any subject we put our minds to. That simply isn't the case. We don't have that kind of sovereign power. Part of our problem is a major misunderstanding of the nature of power. We understand it as something to be imposed on other people.

Nonviolence has another understanding of power. But the point at which we in the nonviolent community have failed is that we too have been unable to come up with alternative strategies for dealing with these kinds of situations.

F And you don't have any to suggest?

W

If we had not backed guerrillas and had chosen instead to encourage the kind of nonviolent efforts that were being made, it's possible that the kind of bloodshed, and wholesale slaughter, and rape, and burning of cities that has eventuated might have been averted. But we just don't know. I think it's important to keep saying that there are situations in history which are simply tragic, where we are not able to intervene effectively, whether violently or nonviolently.

F But we can make matters worse?

W

We did make matters worse by not accepting the fact that we are not omnipotent.

F What scriptures come to mind? How would we relate God to this situation?

W

One that comes immediately to mind is Jesus weeping over Jerusalem: "If you had only recognized the things that make for peace."

F Would Jerusalem be the United States?

W

I think Kosovo and Serbia are the primary actors here. They certainly haven't been able to live peacefully with their own people, and that's the tragedy behind everything else that has happened. We have tried to come in there and impose peace by force. The moment we do that, the more these groups become ethnically identified and the more impossible it is to envision any kind of future in which they could live together peacefully with other ethnic groups. The hatred which has come out of all this conflict is a legacy that will now persist for years, decades, centuries to come.

F Does any scripture besides Jesus weeping over Jerusalem come to mind?

W

Jesus' statements about loving the enemy are the ultimate challenge to that whole region. Until that happens, there is no future for the former Yugoslavia. Jesus' teachings about turning the other cheek would certainly be appropriate. But the moment for those who had that kind of response seems to have passed.

F I keep trying to get you to be more activist. The message tha I've gotten from your books is that nonviolence is not a passive thing. It needs to be active, and I am surprised to hear you say that there is a time when all hope is lost for nonviolence. What do we do now?

W

(Laughs.) You can see why I was reluctant to be interviewed. I think we have to be aware that the belief that there always has to be somethin we can do is not so much a biblical attitude as an American attitude.

The Bible is in many ways a tragic book as well as being a book full of hope. When the prophets preached doom on Israel there was sometimes a clause that said if you will repent and do right God will restore you. But in other cases it was, "This is it, folks." And that's the kind of apocalyptic scenario I see unfolding in Kosovo. It is in Mark 13 and the Book of Revelation. If you want some scriptures, those are the ones that are unfolding. But they're not prescriptive. They don't say get out and do something. This is a situatio where the prophets stand with their hands empty and offer nothing . . . except the recognition that God is still the lord of history.

What that will mean for the actual refugee family in tent Number 1,260 is not clear.

F Many people in our country don't want to be bothered by the situation of people in another part of the world. The main priority is to keep the US economy running and to do nothing to interfere with our prosperity.

W

I think that's unfair to say in this situation. There has been a tremendous public outpouring of funds and support for the refugees and for the people who are suffering as a result of the Serbian offensive in Kosovo. It s an amazingly warmhearted response. We see these terrible scenes on television, and our hearts go out to these folks who are going hrough such horrendous experiences. We wonder what it would be ike to be in their shoes.

There is such good-heartedness in Americans, that maybe our biggest problem is that we want so desperately to make everything okay. We don't want people to be in tents. We want them to be happy and in their homes. Surely there's something we can do to stop what is happening. Surely if we just bomb them a little bit, that will make the government repent. But when that doesn't happen we say, "Well, we'll bomb them a little harder. Then they'll repent. And we'll bring in Apache helicopters, then they'll repent. Next we'll bring in ground troops, then they'll repent."

There is this ominous series of refrains in the book of Revelation where all these plagues are visited on the earth. After each one it says, "But they would not repent." I think we are seeing that in the response of Milosevic. He is not going to repent.

F I wonder if we in America need to repent as well.

W

I think we do need to repent for our dependence on force and power. I think it is well-meaning, which is what makes it even more difficult to deal with. We really would like to help these people. We are horrified by what we see the Serbian government doing. But what we haven't learned yet is how to prepare ourselves in a national sense for nonviolent kinds of responses. Even if they wouldn't solve the problem, they certainly wouldn't escalate the violent response that seems to be the typical scenario.

Q Is there a possibility the US will learn the limits of its power by the failure of this situation?

W

That's a very open question. We are the only empire left in the world. We're different from most empires in the sense that Americans don't want to think that we're an empire. We don't want to accept the responsibilities of empire, and the difficulties. The biggest problem with empires is that they have too much power and they don't know how to act in limited ways. Empires are almost defined by their capacity to impose their will on others. As long as we have so much power, I think it's almost inevitable that we're going to misuse it.

It's not impossible for us to learn, but it would be very difficult because of the tradition of violence. I call it the myth of redemptive violence. We really believe that violence saves. As long as the mythology that violence is what is going to get us out of this jam continues to be the dominant perspective of the American people, it's going to be hard for this government and its people to learn from these situations. People still say that if Congress had given us more troops we could have won in Vietnam. That's absurd. But it's part of the mythology that violence saves, and if you don't win it's because you didn't use enough violence.

F I wonder if churches ought to orient themselves more to the global situation, now that the globe is shrinking.

W

There is a very important role for the churches to play in the world situation. And I think the Church of the Brethren is one of the chief instruments in that. I think there is nothing more important that the Church of the Brethren, or the Quakers, or the Mennonites, could be doing right now, than to be proclaiming the gospel of nonviolence as integral to and central to the message of Jesus. This is a long-range work. But you already have a long history of that kind of work.

As I travel about speaking to different groups, one of the things that I've encountered is a loss of the centrality of the peace witness that these churches have carried over the years. Yet it has never been more timely.

F But you've said the peace churches have been too passive?

W

I think they have been too passive. We have to have much more aggressive, even coercive, kinds of nonviolent direct action.

But even though I have sounded negative and unhopeful in the discussion we've had, on the whole nonviolence has been extraordinarily successful in the last two decades. It is the only thing that is working. In 1989 and 1990 alone, 13 nations underwent nonviolent revolutions and all were successful except China. That involved 1.7 billion people, a third of the human race.

If you add in all the other nonviolent struggles of this century, two-thirds of the human race has been involved in nonviolent struggles and they have almost all been successful.

Our failure to be able to apply nonviolent direct action to the situation in Yugoslavia should not blind us to the tremendous success it has had in the last few years.

David Dellinger remarked once that we're in the situation with nonviolence that Edison and Marconi were with electricity. They knew they had a tremendous power in their hands but they didn't know exactly how to use it. That's where we are with nonviolence. We have been very successful in using it in struggles for freedom.

So it is a very exciting time to be alive, a very exciting time to be trying to figure out how to apply nonviolence to all the kinds of injustices we face in the world today. I don't want our discussion of Yugoslavia, where we don't know what to do, to take away from the tremendous success stories in so many nations around the world.

What to remember for the millennium

And what to forget

Photo illustration by Marianne Sackett

BY KENNETH L. GIBBLE

It won't be long until we find ourselves in a new millennium. Soon we will know for sure if all the dire predictions about the arrival of the new millennium will have come to pass. The scenarios are scary indeed— a stock market crash, total financial chaos, power failures throwing our cities into utter darkness, nuclear devices exploding and causing death and destruction.

Now if you really find it necessary to worry about such things, I suppose you should just go ahead and worry. But maybe, instead of worrying about all the terrible things being predicted for the year 2000, we should use the coming days and weeks to reflect prayerfully on the ways God has been and will be at work in human history and in our own lives.

We can begin by considering the words of a prophet. In the book of Isaiah, chapter 51, words are addressed to the people of God in a very difficult situation. Jerusalem, the holy city, has been overrun by the armies of Babylon. The people have been taken into exile. There, in a strange land, with no temple to worship in, with no prospect of returning home, God's people are tempted to despair. They wonder if God has forgotten them or perhaps rejected them forever. If ever a situation looked hopeless, this was it. Into this desperate situation, the prophet announces a message from the Lord.

> *Listen to me, you that pursue righteousness, you that seek the* LORD. *Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug. Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, but I blessed him and made him many (Isa. 51:1-2).*

Those words are a message of assurance. It's a message that asks a despairing people to remember — remember what the Lord has done for you. Remember the rock from which you were hewn, remember Abraham and Sarah and how the Lord made from them a people to love and serve the Lord.

Remembering isn't very popular these days. We are part of a culture insatiably fascinated by whatever is new and now. A horrible hurricane that devastates the people of Central America makes the nightly news for maybe a week and then is all but forgotten, even though the lives of people there will be disrupted for years by that disaster.

But God's people dare not succumb to such careless amnesia. We are summoned to remember, to remember with joy how the Lord's hand has guided our spiritual ancestors, to remember with sorrow how many times those ancestors failed to

Brethrening

How God astounded our church this morning!

Last spring the Venice (Fla.) Church of the Brethren was faced with an $8,000 deficit. Direct mail letters went out to all friends and members. One of the women organized a craft show for a hundred vendors twice and brought in over $1,000. With help from available members and with the yard sale and gifts, the church faced only a $2,000 deficit in January of this year. But even though so much had been done, that was discouraging.

At the January board meeting, discussion focused on what to do. The $1,200-per-month rent of the present building was a major consideration. Should we look for someplace else to meet? But in Venice rent will be high and to consider a house fellowship, parking would be a problem. Many things were discussed, including renting from another church, which would no doubt mean having services in the afternoon or evening. Nothing was very satisfactory.

If you still have the October 1998 MESSENGER, look at the ad inside the front cover. The Friends church is building a retirement home, Woodmere at Jacaranda, just around the curve from our church. Pastor Mary Boyd had brought this to our attention when the ad first ran because potential members from either Friends or Brethren might locate there. As Mary and I talked about all this while we were quilting, I said, "What about the retirement center? They often have a chapel. Maybe it could be rented." Well, yes, that had been mentioned, but no one knew much about the place as yet.

At the morning's service in late January when visitors were welcomed, a Mrs. Martin introduced herself and her obey the Lord's commands. It is good, it is necessary, to remember.

But the prophet had another message for the people in exile. It was a message that pointed in a much different direction. Through the prophet, the Lord says this:

> *Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert (Isa. 43:18-19).*

It is true that remembering can be a good thing. It is also true that remembering can be a bad thing. Remembering can seduce us into a nostalgic longing for "the good old days." And, for most of us, the "good old days" means about 30 years ago, when life was so much simpler.

Of course, back then people were longing for the real good old days, by which they meant 30 years before that! Our remembering tends to be selective, a remembering that too easily brushes aside all the bad stuff we'd rather not deal with.

Thirty years ago was 1969, when our nation was being torn apart by a war in Vietnam, when Americans were dying by the thousands and Vietnamese were dying by the hundreds of thousands. Thirty years before that was 1939, when Hitler was on the move, rounding up the Jews, invading Poland.

When you and I are tempted to romanticize the past, when we find ourselves wishing things could be as they used to be, then the word of the Lord confronts us as it did the people of God in exile: "Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth. . . . "

I'm not as young as I used to be. Things that are new don't excite me as much as they used to. I feel threatened by loss of what is familiar, comfortable. The new always brings with it some heart-racing anxiety.

God knows about this anxiety. God knows we are tempted to hunker down and hold on to what we have. It seems so much safer to do that. But playing it safe cannot be the game plan for the people of God.

There is danger in forgetting what we must remember. So as we approach a new millennium we must remember Abraham and Sarah and all the other pioneers of faith who did not play it safe but moved forward faithfully and courageously.

There is danger in remembering what we must forget. So in this last year of the 20th century we must forget–leave behind–the notion that the-way-things-used-to-be is a blueprint for the future. God is always doing new things; we must ask God to help us discern how we can be part of those new things.

There is a member of our church who has been in prison for many years, serving a life sentence for taking the lives of two men in our community. On occasion I go to visit him. Gary acknowledges that he did a terrible thing. I believe the terrible thing he did was in large measure a result of the terrible things he experienced in Vietnam. Be that as it may, his chances of release from prison before he dies are very slim. The last time I visited him, I asked him, "What keeps you going? Do you still have hope?" Gary is a quiet, soft-spoken man. He thought for a moment and then said, "Yes, I have hope. If you don't have hope, you might as well pack it in."

That's right, isn't it? Hope is what we need, what God gives us, as we enter a new millennium. We cannot know with certainty what lies ahead. But, as people of faith say, "We do not know what the future holds. But we do know Who holds the future."

Kenneth L. Gibble is pastor of the Chambersburg (Pa.) Church of the Brethren.

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parents, the Rev. and Mrs. Kenneth Long. Kenneth and Grace were at the Rock Run Church of the Brethren, near my home in New Paris, Ind., back in the 1950s. I was eager to reacquaint with them at the close of the service.

We had choir practice following the service. When we finished, Associate Pastor Jim Graybill came up and said he had an announcement: He and Pastor Mary had just had a meeting with Mrs. Martin, who turned out to be the wife of the CEO of the Friends retirement home. Her husband had sent her to invite the Venice Church of the Brethren to be the resident church for the retirement center. The chapel is finished and the building project is expected to be completed within the year, so we could begin there any time. They have have a Friends meeting there in the evening, but no one has morning services. The administrator felt some of his residents would want a more formal preaching service than the Friends generally have, and the Church of the Brethren would be more closely associated with the Friends than some other churches in the community.

Questions tumbled out. Where is it? How soon? How much? We formed a circle and prayed a rejoicing prayer and some of us shared tissues afterwards. The moment was electric when this group was stunned with the act of God and the movement of the Holy Spirit among us. Our first meeting in their chapel happened one month later.—Dorothy A. Gall

Dorothy A. Gall is an associate member of Venice Community Church of the Brethren.

Messenger would like to publish other short, colorful, humorous or poignant stories of real-life incidents involving Brethren. Please send your submission to Messenger, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120-1694 or e-mail to the editor at ffarrar_gb@brethren.org.

Marianne Sackett

Pitfalls of pastoral counseling

BY DON BOOZ

When I attended seminary in the late 1970s, pastoral counseling was the most popular class. In fact, many of my peers would travel to other seminaries in the area to attend ever more classes about how to perform the much-needed ministry of pastoral counseling. Today, the need is no less great but the implications are far greater.

Pastoral counseling has built-in pitfalls that every pastor should consider before entering into a counseling relationship with a parishioner. Of course, not every pastor has the time, skill, and energy necessary for pastoral counseling. Nevertheless, all pastors are, from time to time, called upon to do pastoral counseling. What follows is the top 10 list of how things can go wrong in any pastoral counseling relationship with a parishioner:

1. Relationship never the same. When a pastor enters a counseling situation with a parishioner, the relationship is never the same afterward. This is largely due to the intimacy inherent in the process. The pastor may know things about the parishioner that no one else knows. Furthermore, the parishioner will share things with the pastor that, though confidential, might cause the parishioner to feel ill at ease outside the counseling setting.

2. Is that me? Listening to the sermons by the pastor may cause the parishioner to wonder if the pastor is speaking about something he or she shared in the counseling session. Although the pastor may be saying something without regard to the counseling session, the parishioner sits in the pew wondering if the pastor is speaking about what he or she shared from past counseling session.

3. Lack of skill. Often the pastor is providing counseling out of a concern for meeting the pastoral needs of the congregation. However, quite often the pastor's skills reflect a lack of intensive training to meet the varied and demanding needs of the parishioners. Furthermore, most pastors, even if properly trained at a seminary, fail to upgrade their counseling skills after leaving seminary.

4. Lack of time. Many pastors do not have the time necessary to adequately provide a ministry of pastoral counseling. Pastors also often underestimate the time necessary for pastoral counseling to be helpful an effective. Moreover, pastors may even come to resent the time being demanded for pastoral counseling. Pastors sometimes overlook time constraints and time management skills needed when entering a pastoral counseling role with a parishioner.

5. Lack of clear boundaries. Pastors wear many hats when relating t their parishioners, and pastoral counseling is one of many roles. Some pastors and parishioners do not know when the counseling session begins and ends. Pastors and parishioners alike may continue the counseling dialog outside the counseling setting. Pastors are particularly vulnerable to offering advice when parishioners ask for help outside the counseling setting.

6. Too much information. Pastor are often privy to personal information about their parishioners. But this is especially true if the pastor is in a counseling relationship with a parishioner. Whenever a committee suggests a person for a particular position, the pastor may be placed i an awkward situation. The pastor may not know what to say or how much to share about the person's qualifications to hold a position in the church.

7. Triangulation. Many pastors in a counseling situation are placed in a triangle relationship between the parishioner and others. Without realizing it, the pastor can become emotionally triangled between a husband and wife or a child against the parent. A triangle may also develop between the pastor, the church, and a parishioner. Detriangling or "getting out of the middle" is a recurring problem for many pastors when they enter the pastoral counseling role.

8. Power imbalance. When pastoral counseling is completed, the parishioner may feel a sense of gratitude toward the pastor. Because most churches do not reimburse that pastor for pastoral counseling, the parishioner or counselee may want to do something for the pastor. The pastor may also use and/or abuse such imbalance inappropriately by asking the parishioner to hold a position or perform a function in the church. This imbalance often goes undetected by the pastor and the parishioner.

9. Sexuality. It goes without saying that pastors and parishioners alike are sexual beings. Parishioners may subtly transmit sexual feelings toward the pastor and vice versa. Pastors often try to ignore such feelings, but sexual issues are present nonetheless. Pastors sometimes forget that it is always the pastor's responsibility to maintain the trust and integrity of pastoral counseling despite any sexual attraction.

10. Messiah complex. By their nature and calling, pastors like to be helpful. Some pastors see themselves as a servant to all people day or night. However, not all pastors have the skill, time, and energy necessary to do adequate pastoral counseling. Even worse, some pastors believe they can meet most, if not all, the counseling needs of their parishioners.

It is important for all pastors to recognize that pastoral counseling requires skill, time, and the support of the congregation. The congregation should participate in this vital ministry by providing funds for liability insurance coverage. Pastors also need additional funds for ongoing training and to acquire the services of a trained supervisor for pastoral counseling.

Pastors need the protection that liability insurance gives if they are to provide any amount of pastoral counseling. Pastors also need the supervision, experience, and training of someone outside the congregation who can help see situations and patterns that the pastor may not have the skill or training to see. My many years of pastoral counseling convince me that pastors should not do pastoral counseling unless these two actions by the church board or executive committee are in place.

The demand for pastoral counseling never ceases in the life of a congregation. Yet pastors cannot be effective pastoral counselors unless they become aware of the top 10 reasons for how things can go wrong in a pastoral counseling setting. Congregational support and pastoral supervision are the two main ingredients necessary to help prevent things from going wrong. If these two ingredients are in place, then most pastors can provide an effective ministry in pastoral counseling.

Don Booz, pastor of the McPherson (Kan.) Church of the Brethren and a member of the General Board, has been a trainer for "Clergy Misconduct: Sexual Abuse in the Ministerial Relationship." This is a program designed by The Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence, and Marie Fortune, who wrote the book Not in My Church. *For the past seven years, Booz has been training churches and districts of various denominations about the misuse of power in the ministerial role.*

Brethrening

Quiet bravery

At our best, we Brethren are quietly faithful Christians. We tend to shy away from the spotlight and to not crave attention and credit. That deep thread in our identity has led to a mistaken notion that we are confused about our faith and that we have few heroes. On the contrary, I believe that there are many Brethren who are living out their calling in courageous and faithful ways.

When my friend Shirley Kirkwood and I were leaving the Carbondale Annual Conference in 1984, we stopped just outside the city to "gas up" for the trip home to Virginia. That was before the days of self service so, while we bought a snack, an attendant filled the gas tank and washed the windshield. As we were settling back into the car for our long trip, the attendant walked to the window and hesitantly asked whether we were part of the group that called themselves Brethren, which had been meeting at the university all week. We replied that we were, and that we were on our way home.

He said, "You know, I've always wanted to meet a Brethren. When I served in World War II, one of the guys in my unit was Brethren. He was a medic; he didn't carry a gun. We were in the thick of it, you know, and he was everywhere . . . I think he got hit, I've never been sure. I don't know where he was from. I've always wished I'd have gotten to know him better. He was the bravest person I've ever known."—MARTHA S. BARLOW

Martha S. Barlow, of Dayton, Va., is a member of the General Board.

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In praise of small churches

A new book outlines steps toward renewal in rural ministry

Gerald Klaus

BY JAMES L. KINSEY

The fantasy rolls on. "There's a church in the valley by the wildwood, a little brown church in the vale." That church is seen as a relic of the past, a museum of antiques that no longer fits the modern worl Her membership is the butt of jokes and horror stories by preachers and comedians alike.

Yet the small membership/rural church is the bedrock of the Churc of the Brethren. On her foundation leaders are formed and supported, per capita mission funding is strong and a language of faith is ingrained into the lives of her membership.

When the Church of the Brethren experiences renewal, that renewal will come from those working in thi bedrock institution. The future of t church rests on that small membership body of believers.

A small membership church is defined as having a base of 150 members or fewer. Some 65 percent of

About the photos

Antelope Valley Church of the Brethren is a growing and active rural congregation in north central Oklahoma, outside the town of Billings, pop. 750. Some 75 to 85 people worship there on Sundays, up from an attendance of about 40 several years ago. Gerald Klaus has been pastor there for the past 8 1/2 years.

Klaus says the old cliché that the future of the church is in its youth is not always true with the rural church, where the troubled agricultural economy cannot keep young parishioners from moving away at the first opportunity. "The future of the rural church is the unchurched," he says. Most of the growth of the Antelope Valley congregation has come from this group, particularly couples in their twenties and thirties. This group has formed an enthusiastic Bible study class called Young Disciples. Klaus says some of the newcomers had been offended by other churches, or their parents had been. Several came wanting their children to be raised in a church. "They feel a real hunger for the Lord."

Small-church financial realities have made it necessary for the pastor to have outside employment. But Klaus, who does small construction jobs, roofing, and painting, as well as agricultural field work, uses the contacts he makes in his outside work to draw in outsiders to the church. His background in agriculture helps, too. "I understand their frustrations with prices and the weather. I know what they're going through." —THE EDITOR

Coby Snyder

A time for children *is a highlight of Sunday worship at Antelope Valley.*

Church of the Brethren congregations fall into that category. There are 90,000 of our 150,000 members who ive out their faith in these groupings. Another 20,000 are in congregations of 200 active members.

The Church of the Brethren is a small membership denomination. We do our best work in small family groupings. The Brethren thrive in family- or pastoral-centered congregations. We read our Bibles from that perspective.

It is okay to be a small membership church. Once we come to terms with that fact, once we give up our "large size" idolatry, once we see church growth as the planting of more groups of this same size, the healthier our entire system will become. Resources will be developed that fit our size. Pastors will be trained who know, love, and can work transformational ministries within the small membership church context.

This group *from the Antelope Valley church traveled many hours to the passion play in Eureka Springs, Ark.*

Shannon Jung, Pegge Boehm, Deborah Cronin, Gary Farley, C. Dean Freudenberger, Judith Bortner Heffernan, Sandra LeBlanc, Edward L. Queen II, and David Ruesink have team-written a helpful book entitled: *Rural Ministry: The Shape of Renewal to Come* (Abingdon Press 1998).

Rural Ministry is a primer that every pastor in the Church of the Brethren should read. The book is overtly optimistic. The authors love and appreciate the small membership/rural congregation.

Rural Ministry opens with a review of rural America. For these authors, "rural" is a mind-set, not a geographical location. Inner-city groupings can be as rural-minded as congregations in the wheat lands of North Dakota. Rural groups are family systems that hold values in common for the sake of future generations. Relationships are primary. The Bible is understood in terms of family systems and relationships.

The authors take us on a journey of understanding. The first stop is to find where your congregation is located in the American landscape and what challenges that location faces. Congregations located adjacent to a large town or city will have a different set of values and modes of living together than the same-sized congregation that is 20 miles or more from that same city. Reviewing your geographical location will assist you in understanding how your church family works. Each congregation is unique but, at the same time, similar to others in the same sociological and political locations.

The second stop takes a look at emerging issues that face the small membership/rural church. We all are moving from the "little brown church" to cyberspace, whether we like it or not. The world "out there" is changing our perceptions of the people we live with and the way we go about our daily lives. Economics of any area deeply affect the nature of the church family. Population trends determine our futures and the people with whom we will work. Even in the farm business, satellite systems show us the world markets, when and where to sell or buy, and the news around the world that will affect next year's crops. We are pushed to think and work globally.

Some people moving into our communities are there not because of job relocation but to live out a "rural lifestyle." They see the church as a "retreat" from the high-pressure technological world in which they live. The demand for the "little brown church in the vale" will frustrate the "natives" who want to think globally, and mo on into newer technolo gies and the church lif that those technologies bring. The authors advise not to attack th desire to "retreat." It i better to understand why each person is stressed and wants "retreat." Only then ca healing ministries take place and a mission emerge.

Rural Ministry then asks us to learn the art of thinking theologically. We are asked to develop a theology for our congregation. We are directed to ask que tions such as: "Where God working in our community?" "How d we see the God of the Bible coming alive in t real world around us?' To do this, training the ologians is the primary pastoral work.

An example: Rural people seem to have a very strong belief that God is actively present in their lives. They believe that there is a spiritual and moral center in the world. The task of the believer is to understand and tap into that center It is God who holds that center, despite the changes that come in ou daily lives.

Beverly Harris

An Easter Sunday school *party in the church basement, surpervised by Karen Klaus.*

Karen Klaus

An active and growing class *of young adults who call themselves "Young Disciples" meets for Bible study in the home of Pastor Gerald Klaus.*

Coby Snyder

Going forth to serve.

Once a theology is eveloped from this entral belief system, hen a re-visioning rocess can lead us to ee where, how, and what God wants us to ecome as a church amily. We are prodded o lift up the moral character of the congregation and to expand it to speak and work within the global community.

The final stop is mission planning. No, this s not a "how to" with magic wands that do our work for us. We are given a process of enabling our membership to see "Visioning Rural Ministry Again or the First Time." The ask of the church is to put real ministry flesh on the unique institutions, values, rituals, behaviors, signs, and symbols that make up each congregation.

Since small membership and rural congregations are all different from one another, the task is not to come up with a one-size-fits-all fix, but to grow the church's mission and ministry around these unique values. For example, barn-building values (when a person has lost home and business due to fire or storm) will translate into many helping ministries even when disasters are personal, such as divorce or death.

We are called on to make the whole system work for the generations to come, not in content but in process. There is a sense that the values that each congregation and community hold will remain the same for generations to come. Thus, working on ministries that lift up those values will influence the quality of life for our grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Rural Ministry is written for folks who live in the country or in small towns. However, when read for the principles of discovery, when read for the meat of how to live out transformational ministry, it will fit most Church of the Brethren congregations.

The time is now to lift up our heritage and to celebrate it. We lift up our story not to hear antique tales, nor to recreate the "good old days." We lift that story up to celebrate our Anabaptist, barn-raising, feetwashing family of God. Our niche is to be that kind of people for the sake of the gospel and for the sake of souls needing refreshment in our world.

The book closes with this question: "How would the American church appear to the local community if, instead of presenting a small group of people intent on institutional survival, it was viewed as a force for community strength and change?" Instead of seeing the community around the churchhouse as a place where people and funds can be found to keep the doors of the church open, that community is seen as the arena where we reach out to share Christ's love. That community is the place where we hold high our values, sharing them in profound ministries of caring and sharing. M.

James L. Kinsey is district minister/executive for Michigan District and is an Area 2 Congregational Life Team member. He is certified through the Texas A&M Extension Service as a facilitator for rural studies and is a trainer and consultant for small membership congregations.

Letters

God gave his son . . .

Christ gave his life . . .

unless we give, we die spiritually.

Give us more on giving

Thanks for your article on "Faithful Funding" [November]. It is good that church budgets are planned once a year, which provides an impetus for us to examine our relationship to our resources. Hopefully, we will not limit such an important subject as stewardship to a once-a-year treatment. Biblical scholars tell us that more is written on stewardship than any other single subject.

Speaking of biblical subjects, did I miss something? In no article did I detect any reference to tithing. We tend to dismiss it as being predominantly Old Testament. But, at a minimum, it far exceeds the 1 to 3 percent that most Brethren give. More Brethren giving a tenth would have made unnecessary a redesign program, and would make possible a far greater ministry than we have ever envisioned. It would also eliminate the need for church suppers—the money-raising kind—auctions, and other less-than-biblical activities.

Another biblical theme that you came close to in your article, but seemed to me not to stress, is "the basic need of a Christian giver to give." As I understand the New Testament, we give not to raise a budget, to fund a project, to promote a program, nor even to do missions. Instead, we give because it is basic to our faith. God gave his son . . . Christ gave his life . . . unless we give, we die spiritually. It is almost selfish, but it is the essence of our faith. It is not so much "Faithful Funding" as it is "Faithful Giving." Or, in words of the Wesleyan tradition, "Giving is part of the perfecting work of God."

It is obvious we need more stewardship education, more sermons on stewardship, and more dedication to the Christian faith which makes giving just as important as prayer, fellowship, service, and communion. Thanks, MESSENGER, for leading the way, but don't stop with one month!

Eugene Lichty
McPherson, Kan.

Hooked on the Big Meeting

Having attended 50 consecutive Annual Conferences of the Church of the Brethren, I will have to confess that I'm hooked! I show all the symptoms of an addict. It began when I was a student at Manchester College and witnessed the "delegate" conference, which was limited because of World War II. It was a lively meeting centering on the issue of becoming part of the Federal Council of Churches, the forerunner of the National Council of Churches. Incidentally, the final vote was 690 to 15 to become a member.

When I became a pastor I felt strongly that a pastor should attend conference in order to witness and participate firsthand, as well as encourage other members of the local church to do so.

Over the years the benefits to me and, I believe, to the churches I served include:

- Exposure to church leaders, Brethren and others;
- Growth experiences through th Ministers Association and insigl sessions, as well as informal contacts;
- The uplift of great worship and music;
- The unifying experience of the "Big Meeting."

Annual Conference was also wher the family attended and took vacation time to visit different parts of the nation and Canada.

I have also attended many other conferences and workshops and know the importance of these. The National Older Adult Conference is already well established and it is great for us "senior" Brethren. But trust that it will not be a substitute for Annual Conference, which need the input of all segments of the Brethren family. It is, after all, the place where worldwide plans and programs are approved.

Herbert Fish
Mountain Grove, M

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ravel with a purpose: Joan and Wendell Bohrer pre-ent Spain, Portugal, and Morocco, Aug. 5-18, 1999. 15 ays at $2,799, with all accommodations except lunch. isit Lisbon, Madrid, Seville, Granada, and a great deal ıore. NOTE: There is room available on our Passion lay Tours for the year 2000. For information, write, el/fax or e-mail rdwboh@strato.net. Tel/fax: 941-382-371. After April 1: 8520 Royal Meadow Dr., Indianapolis, N 46217

reasures of Italy. Travel on Nov. 2, 1999 from Wash-ıgton, D.C. (Dulles Airport) to Rome, then to orrento-Capri (via Pompeii), Assisi, Venice (via San Marino), tressa (via Verona), and Florence (via Genoa and Pisa). 'rice: $2,198 per person. This 14-day tour includes hotels, ıreakfasts, 10 dinners, sightseeing, airport transfers, and ervices of a professional tour director. Deposit $300 and/or equest brochure from: Wayne F. Geisert, President Emer-tus, Bridgewater College, Box 40, Bridgewater, VA 22812 'hone: 540-433-1433 or 828-5494.

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14388 N. 79th Avenue
Peoria, AZ Office # (623) 587-1911
Sunday Services 10:30 AM

Phoenix 1st Church of the Brethren
3609 N. 27th Street
Phoenix, AZ 85016 (602) 955-8537
Sunday Services 10:45 AM

Tucson Church of the Brethren
2200 North Dodge Boulevard
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Sunday Services 10:00 AM

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July 1, 1999
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Turning Points

New members

Amwell, N.J.: Beth Gleeson, Kelly Mozingo, David Palmer, Zina Staroschak, Walter Johnston, Norma Johnston, Michael Miller, LaNell Miller, Gary Mozingo, Stacia Nash, Paul Kamaras, Michael Simon
Arcadia, Ind.: Harold Knapp, Ada Knapp, Esther Spivey, Fred Knapp, Dale Nightenhelser, Beverly Nightenhelser
Arlington, Va.: Larry and Mattie Harms, Silena Davis, Matt Cooke, Chelsea McCarthy
Bassett, Va.: Jessica Helbert, Russell Pack, Daniel Alderman
Bush Creek, Monrovia, Md.: James Paul, Dianne Paul
Decatur, Ill.: Don Lair, Margaret Zea
Eastwood, Akron, Ohio: Bill Burch, Vickie Myers
Elizabethtown, Pa.: Kevin Engle, Amy Engle, Elyse Groff, Matthew Heinz, Annalie Heinz, Scott Stouffer
First, Reading, Pa.: Stephanie Blatt, Nicole DeFazio, Arlena Focht, Alfredo Guerrero, Jeanne Hamilton, Kevin Lally, Susan Lally, Barbara Sensenig, Richard Sensenig, Sr.
Friendship, Linthicum, Md.: Robin Noyes, John and Mary Campbell, Heather Simmons
Germantown Brick, Rocky Mount, Va.: Trudy Plunkett, Michael Starkey, Marilyn Starkey
Green Tree, Oaks, Pa.: Jacklyn Levengood, Sheryl Millard, Ruth Vogt
Hanover, Pa.: Christine O'Polka
Highland Ave., Elgin, Ill.: Bertie and Maurice Angle, Roger and Alice Golden, Lee and Josie Hickman, Ryan Kellerman, Dennis Kingery, Vic Kressin, Daniel and Pam Meyer, Matt and Virginia Meyer, Cyndi Fecher, Jack and Chris Flores, Rachel Flores, Paul Teetor, Anna Speicher, William Turbyfill, Christian Velazquez, Jeff Abbott, Angela Chestnut, Steve and Bonnie Graham, Scott Johans, Jonathan Keeney, Pam Keller, Bettina Perillo, Matthew Rucker, Gerald and Shirley Witt
Hollins Road, Roanoke, Va.: Shirley Mills
La Verne, Calif.: Bob and Terry Bennett, Nicki Brandt, Chuck Butterfield, Gary Colby, Tracy Taylor, Tom Evans, Kristin Thomas, Kathryn Bache, Ben Meck, Anna Mary Welch, Maren Woodruff
Lampeter, Pa.: Rick Mylin, Scott McGinnis, Amanda Sturdevant, Erin Witman
Lancaster, Pa.: Rebecca Achenbach, Cindy Brown, Mike and April Curran, Grover and Gloria Gouker, Wayne and Pat Judd, David and Karen Longenecker, Floyd and Joy Montgomery, Nancy Rike, Jeff and Gale Shirk, Tammy Showalter, Nick Siegrist, Shirley Siegrist, Sharon Slonaker, Will Stout, Brenda Wagaman, Doug and Lisa Witmer, Emmy Gene Brenner, Ted Cook, Courtney Deihm, Adam Ferguson, Ryan Forsha, Erin Kreider, Jonilyn Longenecker, Jason Mackey, Kristin Pugliese, Danielle Tankesley
Lebanon, Mt. Sidney, Va.: Robert Michael, Willma G. Click
Lebanon, Pa.: Nancy Morris
Lewiston, Minn: Daniel Glover, Marilyn Glover, Fran Bockenhauer
Locust Grove, New Castle, Ind.: Don and Shelba Bowne
Lone Star, Lawrence, Kan.: Carol Waisner, Megan Tate, Joyce Leonard, Mark Leonard
Long Green Valley, Glen Arm, Md.: Bonnie Fallin, Laura Hart, Barbara Poole
Manor, Boonsboro, Md.: Chad Clipp, Stephanie Clipp, Angela Clipp, Erica Bailey, Dustynn Knight, Dwayne Knight, Mark Baker, Ray Shantz, Heather Fee, Brian Spielman
Maple Spring, Eglon, W.Va.: Cross Kisner, Kenneth and Edith Biser
Maple Spring, Hollsopple, Pa.: John D. and Penny Cable
Marsh Creek, Gettysburg, Pa.: Dennis Dawes, Lisa Dawes, Chrystal Baker, Fernando Rivera, Sheena Hay, Robert Hay III, Roger Ramos, Tammy Nieves-Ramos, Ashlee Musselman, Leighton McCleaf, Nicholas Troop
Mountain Valley, Greeneville, Tenn.: Erin Gaby, Rachel Gaby, Andrew Gaby
New Enterprise, Pa.: Wendy Sue Sipes, Carly Sue Imler, Dennis Brumbaugh, Linda Brumbaugh, Alisha Brumbaugh, Roger and Sherry Wright, Dylan and Britta Snowberger, Bill and Carole Robison, Chad and Trisha Mickle, Cindy Sollenberger, Richard and Patsy Clemens, Derrick and Lori Horne, Randy and Jeffie Singo, Kim Clapper, Earla Reffner, Jack and Betsy Brandick, Vergie Kagarise, Kelly Gates, Cathy Jo Hart
Pine Creek, North Liberty, Ind.: Tim and Amy Jagger, Jeannie Murphy, Nils Lamberson, David Replogle, Rachael and Amanda Pearson, Mike Wolff, Jr.
Pleasant Dale, Decatur, Ind.: Missy Landis, Mark Zurcher, Vicki Zurcher, Brittany Zurcher
Reading, Homeworth, Ohio: Carrie Bandy, Michael Hill, Howard Krug, Allen Mahafee, Brooke Mahafee
Roaring Spring, Pa.: Jim Butler, Bonnie Butler, Cindy Shaw, Grethen Shaw, Faye Eichelberger, John Eichelberger, Mark Coffey, Gail Coffey, Adam Bechtel, Mallory Burns, Troy Crumrine, Kaylee Davis, Johnny Eichelberger, Kristina Hamm, Suzanne Hodgson, Noel Igou, Jeffrey Oakes, Rachael Piper, Megan Sollenberger, Jacob Sullivan, Mindy Sullivan, Jordan Walters
Shrewsbury, Pa.: Robert Boykin, Kathy Boykin, Daniel Boykin, Samuel Weyant
Spring Creek, Hershey, Pa.: Nicholas Breon, Arthur and Mildred Garrison, Roy Gesford Jr., Robert Lehman, Sylvia Lehman, Kyle Lehman, Jacob Mellinger-Blouch, Alison Peters, Alex Royal, Michelle Thomas, Gregory and Deanna Waybright
Woodgrove Parish, Hastings, Mich.: Eric Chase, Kristin Chase, Amber Chase, Stephanie Buskirk, Tony Jados, Nicole Jados, Michael Bolhuis, Randall Bertrand

Wedding Anniversaries

Berkebile, Ronald and Joanne, Glendale, Ariz., 50
Brunner, David and Barbara, Monrovia, Md., 50
Caldwell, Julius and Betty, Roanoke, Va., 50
Carlin, Jack and Verna, Winona, Minn., 50
Coy, Ray and Miriam, Salem, Ohio, 60
Eikenberry, James and Faith, Covina, Calif., 55
Ferguson, Wilson and Dorothy, Bassett, Va., 50
Gorden, Israel and Edwina, Goshen, Ind., 71
Hoffer, Victor and Mabel, Palmyra, Pa., 70
Jordan, Fred and Clara, Salem Va., 70
Knapp, Harold and Ada, Cicero, Ind., 65
Kurtz, Paul and Mary, Lititz, Pa., 50
Oshel, Clifford and Phyllis, Topeka, Kan., 50
Russell, Harry and Maxine, Troy, Ohio, 55
Sauder, Lewis and Dorothy, Manheim, Pa., 55
Schetrompf, Howard and Rose, Everett, Pa., 60
Shellenberger, Ralph and Betty, Harrisburg, Pa., 50
Smith, W.H. and Ava, Bassett, Va., 65
Studebaker, Carroll and Rena, Springfield, Ohio, 50
Underwood, Gilbert and Estelle, Bassett, Va., 60

Deaths

Alexander, Shirley Mae, 56, Upper Tract, W.Va., Nov. 19
Armstrong, Guy Sr., 75, Staunton, Va., Nov. 30
Atkins, Pauline L., 67, Bridgewater, Va., Jan. 1
Barb, Anna, 70, Edinburg, Va., Jan. 16
Beam, Agnes, 94, Mogadore, Ohio, March 3
Bechtel, Lenora M., 91, Elkhart, Ind., March 17
Beck, Hazel, 87, Mt. Vernon, Ohio, March 2
Becker, Kenneth, 74, Elizabethtown, Pa., Nov. 23
Berry, Flora B., 89, Eden, N.C., March 10
Berry, Willard L., 80, Harrisonburg, Va., Feb. 13
Beutler, Catherine Stuckey, 89, Canton, Ohio, Dec. 31
Blount, Lee, Jr., 72, Roanoke, Va., Nov. 20
Botkin, Henry J., 89, Headwaters, Va Nov. 29
Brown, Walter, 84, Elizabethtown, Pa May 13, 1998
Bolton, Willie L., 93, Harrisonburg, Va., Feb. 9
Bowers, Lawrence, 91, Bridgewater, V
Bowman, Harold E., 88, Harrisonbur Va., Dec. 31
Brownsberger, Aileen Rothrock, 89, Verne, Calif., March 24
Brubaker, Wilmer, 80, Troy, Ohio, March 29
Chandler, Charles H., 86, Dayton, Va Feb. 13
Chavis, William James, 72, Danville, Va., 72
Clark, Clair, 58, Johnstown, Pa., Jan. 1
Cline, Freddie W., 47, Edinburg, Va., March 7
Cline, James D., 79, Waynesboro, Va. Dec. 5
Coffman, Mary B., 89, Grottoes, Va., Feb. 15
Cook, Loyd F., 83, Mount Solon, Va., Nov. 22
Corbin, Elizabeth M., 80, Bridgewate Va., Feb. 7
Corbin, Irvin C., 86, Harrisonburg, Va., Feb. 27
Cressler, Howard, 84, Carlisle, Pa., Nov. 21
Cullison, Bernice, 91, Gettysburg, Pa Nov. 6
Dean, Henry L., 76, Purgitsville, W.V Feb. 2
Deffenbaugh, Patricia R., 67, Frieder Pa., Nov. 20
Delk, Ralph, N. Manchester, Ind., Ja 29, 1998
Dellinger, Charles A., 92, Edinburg, Va., Dec. 14
Devereaux, David, 58, Tonasket, Wash., Dec. 14
Dingler, Leah, 89, Timberville, Va., May 10, 1998
Dove, Leo G., 74, Harrisonburg, Va., Feb. 9
Driver, Harry A., 95, Weyers Cave, Va Dec. 8
Durfee, Mable, 100, Ludington, Mich Jan. 16
Erisman, Gladys, 78, La Verne, Calif. Feb. 1
Fitzgerald, Helen, 88, Alexandria, Va. Nov. 29
Forsberg, Harold, 83, Raytown, Mo., March 31
Frazee, Grace, 95, Uniontown, Pa., Jan. 15
Fritts, C. Raymond, 87, Decatur, Ill., Feb. 22
Frye, Gerald R., 69, Woodstock, Va., March 18
Fuqua, William "Tom" E. III, 63, Feb 6, Toms Brook, Va.
Garber, Ruth V., 88, Portsmouth, Va.,

Feb. 1
Garner, Rachel H., 87, Hanover, Pa., March 9
Geisbert, Paul, Frederick Md., Jan. 13
Gerber, John, 63, Hershey, Pa., March 23, 1998
Gibbel, Verda E., 99, Palmyra, Pa., Feb. 27
Goad, Annette Hicks, 59, Roanoke, Va., Aug. 12
Godfrey, Melvin M., 76, York Pa., Feb. 26
Good, Mamie E., 89, Luray, Va., Nov. 22
Gordon, Bertha V., 88, Luray, Va., Feb. 15
Grate, Barbara, 45, Salem, Ohio, March 13
Greenwalt, Charles, 88, Maurertown, Va., Jan. 27
Greiner, Lester, 83, Manheim, Pa., Feb. 20
Griggs, Ruth W., 73, Bourbon, Ind., March 20
Grove, Selma J., 75, Grottoes, Va., Dec. 6
Grove, Wilbur, 70, Jefferson, Iowa, March
Hamer, Merwin, 84, Waterloo, Iowa, Feb. 18
Hammer, Raymond B., 87, Franklin, W.Va., Dec. 11
Heinbach, Ruth, 74, Columbia, Pa., Nov. 7
Herr, Hilda, 86, Mechanicsburg, Pa., Nov. 14
Hildebrand, Debra C., 42, Abingdon, Md., March 10
Hinkle, Blanche E., 80, Old Fields, W.Va., March 13
Hinkle, Donald W., 64, Penn Laird, Va., March 7
Hodges, Nellie Blankenship, 88, Vinton, Va., Dec. 4
Hoel, Maude, 96, Roanoke, Va., Dec. 26
Holsheiser, Charles H., 83, Springfield, Ill., April 7
Hoover, William E., 85, York Pa., March 5
Houff, Robert E., 74, Dorcas, W.Va., Feb. 7
Housden, Reba V., 86, Stanley, Va., Feb. 25
Huffer, Martha M., 87, Mount Solon, Va., March 6
Ikenberry, Rhea F., 91, Timberville, Va., Feb. 6
Jennings, Ruth A., 88, Waterloo, Iowa, Feb. 18
Judy, Mary V., 104, Franklin, W.Va., Feb. 13
Karschner, Audrey, 80, Lewistown, Pa., Dec. 4
Kettering, Mary Elizabeth, 83, Myerstown, Pa., March 15
Ketterman, Lucy C., 77, Richmond, Va., Nov. 21
Kight, Shirley A. "Pancake," 65, Eglon, W.Va., Feb. 20
Kimmel, Herbert, 70, Shelocta, Pa., Jan. 31
King, Delmar, 67, Salem Va., Nov. 28
Kinzie, Geneva, 89, La Verne, Calif., March 4
Kiracofe, June, 74, Lima, Ohio, Jan. 30
Kline, Harold, 88, Bridgewater, Va., Feb. 4
Koogler, James, 78, Lima. Ohio, March 16
Lantz, E. Dow, 66, Timberville, Va., Nov. 28
Lawson, Lorraine, 72, Roanoke, Va., Feb. 2
Lehman, Wilmer, 95, McPherson, Kan., Feb. 19
Lester, Henry, 80, Salem, Va., March 6
Lough, Frances S., 83, Broadway, Va., March 18
Loxley, Geraldine, Troy, Ohio, Feb. 16
Main, Chris, Mount Airy, Md., March 7
Masemer, Harry E., Jr., 82, Carlisle, Pa., March 22
Michael, Robert, 49, Mt. Sidney, Va., Oct. 3
Miller, Elizabeth, 86, Frederick, Md., March 16
Miller, Eula R., 95, Bridgewater, Va., Dec. 11
Miller, Gerald Jr., 54, Edison, N.J., March 28
Miller, James, 91, Lancaster, Pa., Sept. 2
Miller, Virginia M., 89, Harrisonburg, Va., Dec. 21
Mitchell, Joseph, Bridgewater, Va., Jan. 13
Mitchell, Robert N., 76, Harrisonburg, Va., March 8
Mitts, Warren Edward, 69, Mt. Sidney, Va., March 18
Mock, Harley, Wichita, Kan., Jan. 20
Moore, Annie, 96, Ridgely, Md., Feb. 27
Musser, Amelia Detwiler, 86, Glendale, Calif., Feb. 24
Myers, Margaret L., 71, Moorefield, W.Va., Feb. 26
Myers, Sara F., 88, Harrisonburg, Va., Dec. 1
Nasener, Harry E. Jr., 82, Carlisle, Pa., March 22
Norman, Luther A. "Bucky,"Gettysburg, Pa., Nov. 13
Obaugh, Elva C., 94, McDowell, Va., March 6
Over, Ralph, 88, Lancaster, Pa., March 18
Peterson, Lillian, 89, North Liberty, Ind., March 30
Pilapil, Ivy A., 71, Stanley, Va., Feb. 15
Powell, Helen, 86, Troy, Ohio, Feb. 18
Ratliff, Thelma Taylor, 87, Roanoke, Va., Oct. 19
Reel, Elsie B., 94, Maysville, W.Va.
Rexrode, Thurman R., 75, Fulks Run, Va., Feb. 8
Reynolds, Erglene Williams, 80, Sedan, Kan., Jan. 17
Ritchey, Isa, 89, Johnstown, Pa., Jan. 7
Ritterspach, Martha, 87, Lancaster, Pa., March 24, 1998
Rodich, Anna, 85, Berne, Ind., March 8
Roth, Kathryn, 80, Carlisle, Pa., March 18
Rothrock, Hazel, 94, Tonasket, Wash., Feb. 26
Rothrock, Sam F., 84. La Verne, Calif., March 24, 1998
Sager, "Gertie" May, 99, Woodstock, Va., Feb. 14
Sahms, Mildred Kauffman, 79, York, Pa., March 27
Sample, Harold, 78, New Providence, Pa., March 22
Sanborn, Carl, 75, Johnstown, Pa., Jan. 19
Sayre, Nora M., 97, Waynesboro, Va., Dec. 24
Seitz, Marguerite R., 76, New Oxford, Pa., March 16
Shaffer, Bernice, 82, Uniontown, Pa., Feb. 5
Shaver, Viola, 77, Harrisonburg,Va., Dec. 26
Sheets, John, 85, McPherson, Kan., March 6
Shifflett, Charles E., 79, Penn Laird, Va., Dec. 25
Shockey, Charles, 76, Decatur, Ill., March 25
Shoemaker, Mary M., 72, Harrisonburg, Va., March 1
Shull, Virginia B. C., 85, Bridgewater, Va., Nov. 19
Simmons, A. M. "Hun," 83, Franklin W.Va., Feb. 27
Simmons, Eva M., 84, Franklin, W.Va., March 13
Simon, Lucy F., 69, Fort Seybert, W.Va., Nov. 17
Smith, Glenn A., 69, Roaring Spring, Pa., March 3
Smith, Mary R., 83, Shippensburg, Pa., Jan. 22
Southerly, Lottie M., 87, Petersburg, W.Va., Nov. 18
Stanley, S. Earl "Bill," 73, Snow Creek, Va., Nov. 1
Stark, Alma, 74, Elizabethtown, Pa., Jan. 12, 1998
Stites, John, 63, Hershey, Pa., March 22, 1998
Stough, Wilson W., 74, Loganville, Pa., March 28
Strickler, Florida D., 83, Martinsburg, W.Va., March 12
Sunderland, Ora, 77, Lewistown, Pa., Sept. 12
Sweigart, Margie S., 91, York, Pa., March 28
Teets, Charles F., 82, Eglon, W.Va., Feb. 28
Thomas, Ferne, 78, Davidsville, Pa., Feb. 20
Thompson, Marie, 92, Dixon, Ill.
Tomb, Elizabeth, Johnstown, Pa., Nov. 19
Turner, Adam C., 76, Criders, W.Va., March 3
Twaddle, Ben, 78, McPherson, Kan., March 15
Verbeck, Grant, 49, Cle Elum, Wash., March 5
Walker, Elizabeth T., 83, Woodstock, Va., Feb. 7
Weaver, Freeman, 88, Davidsville, Pa., March 10
Weaver, Gladys M., 89, Pasadena, Calif., Feb. 18
Weirick, William, 70, Wichita, Kan., Feb. 13
Wheeler, Edna H., 71, Shenandoah, Va., Dec. 6
Whetzel, Guy A., 86, Romney, W.Va., Nov. 24
Whitmer, Charles O., 71, Verona, Va., March 5
Wilfong, Joseph Emory "Bill," 87, Harrisonburg, Va., March 11
Wright, Roy H., 97, Bridgewater, Va., March 9
Young, Nellie J., 87, Bridgewater, Va., Dec. 10

Licensings

Coulter, Carol, Nov. 7, Enid, Okla.
DeMuth, Joan, May 22, 1997, Lake Charles, La.
Hodges, Carlton, Nov. 1, Bethlehem, Boones Mill, Va.
Kerr, Thomas J., Dec. 21, Christ Our Shepherd, Indianapolis, Ind.
Leaman, Frank Herbert, Feb. 3, York First, York, Pa.
Liggett, Kristin Sue, Dec. 21, Flora, Ind.
Morris, D. Wayne, Sept. 1, Evergreen, Stanardsville, Va.
Rice, Larry Alan, Sept. 8, Prince of Peace, South Bend, Ind.
Royer, Kathryn Sue, Jan. 28, Cedar Grove, New Paris, Ohio
Self, Don, Aug. 7, 1997, Lake Charles, La.
Semple, Robin, May 22, 1997, Lake Charles, La.
Stahl, Ervin, Lowell, Mich., March 6
Ulm, David, June 2, Mt. Zion Road, Lebanon, Pa.
Williams, Daniel, Jan. 30, Bethany, Farmington, Del.
Williams, Donald James, April 7, 1998, Buena Vista Stone, Buena Vista, Va.

Ordinations

Bowers, George, Antioch, Woodstock, Va.
Hazen, Lisa Lynn, Jan. 14, Beavercreek, Ohio
Lovett, Diana Lynn, Oct. 10, Pleasant Hill, Ohio
Replogle, Shawn, Feb. 24, Bridgewater, Va.
Schneiders, Francis, Sept. 18, Walnut, Argos, Ind.
Self, Don, Nov. 6, 1997, Lake Charles, La.
Smith, Leonard W., Jan. 16, Rouzerville, Pa.
Weyant, John S., Jan. 16, Shrewbury, Pa.
Whetzel, J. Diann, June 10, 1997, Front Royal, Va.

Pastoral placement

Brunner, Daniel, to Big Sky, Froid, Mont.
Havey, Edward, Jr., from Dayton, Va., to New Hope, Stuart, Va.
Reinhold, Charles, to Flower Hill, Gaithersburg, Md.
Stovall, Earl, from New Enterprise, Pa., to Bassett, Va.
Shreckhise, Dick, from Annville, Pa., to Lancaster, Pa.
West, Edward, Jr., from Saunders Grove, Moneta, Va., to Selma, Va.
Williams, Melvin, from Newport News, Ivy Farms, Va., to Ninevah, Hardy, Va.
Yeakley, Kevin, to Long Run, Lehighton, Pa.

Editorial

Brave hearts of the Balkans

The only thing I knew, or thought I knew, about the Balkans was that this region has had a history of conflict for the past 500 years. I had heard that repeated over and over during the confusing war in Bosnia, from 1991 to 1995, as I am hearing it too often now. I had come to accept the view that fighting is a genetic defect of those inferior peoples, who are not worth our time or energy to try to help.

But from the time I arrived in Sarajevo in 1997, I began to learn a different view. I was greeted by a sign, "You are welcome in Sarajevo if you come in peace." I gradually discovered the sign reflected a truth held there for centuries. This is a region that has lived in peace, with diversity, for ages. Occasional bloody conflicts arise and capture the world's attention with their ferocity and complexity, but it is the peace that is interrupted by war, not vice versa.

In a Franciscan monastery near Sarajevo, an ancient stone tablet is displayed on a wall. Its inscription in three languages proclaims a pact of cooperation between Muslim, Catholic, and Orthodox peoples of the region. And in another monastery a large painting commemorates the moment in 1463 when the Franciscans in Bosnia received a charter from the Turkish Sultan, representing the Islamic world, legalizing their mission and guaranteeing the safety and status of their Catholic flock. Ethnic and religious peace goes back a long way. Even the recent communist period of Yugoslavia is offered as a prime example of how diverse peoples can live together in harmony. Marshal Tito, who ruled Yugoslavia for 35 years until his death in 1980, may have been known in the US as a communist dictator, but is hailed there as a hero who made a genuine attempt to reconcile the interests of all the country's peoples. It was Tito who, in the mid-1960s, emancipated Kosovo's Albanian majority from Serbian domination, allowing even the despised Albanians to feel, for once, that they belonged.

It is to the Balkans we should go to learn about peace, not to teach it, or impose it. Until only a few years ago Yugoslavs boasted, with good reason, of the cultural diversity which made their country an example to the world. Even now, in the aftermath of war in Croatia and Bosnia, heroic efforts are being made toward building peace with justice, some aided by our own Brethren Volunteer Service. Glaringly missing from the current global debate over Kosovo are any of the experienced and courageous Balkan voices for peace.

One of them is Father Ivo Markovic, a Bosnian Franciscan priest and a professor at the Franciscan Theological Institute in Sarajevo. As host to our tour group at the Franciscan monastery where we stayed, we met him as a jovial guide, and only gradually learned th details of his life. When Serbs captured the area of the city where the seminary is located, Father Ivo and other were held for some time as prisoners there, unsure whether they would survive. He was finally put on a bus and became a refugee in Croatia. He was there when he heard the news about his father.

Ivo took us to his uncle's house to meet his extended family, his uncle and aunt, sister, and mother, who live the mountains an hour and a half outside Sarajevo. When other arrangements had fallen through, Ivo had called them on short notice to ask them to host us. We were greeted with a sumptuous feast and laughter. The was strudel, tomatoes, slaw, stewed lamb, and more laughter. Then, almost incidentally, Ivo told us his fathe had been killed in the war.

The family had been spared longer than other Bosnia Croat families in the area because they had been good t the Muslims as neighbors. But one day in 1993, his 70-year-old father and three other men older than him, on of whom was 94, were lined up and executed.

After dinner Father Ivo took us up the hill to meet the neighbors. The neighbors, we learned, are Muslim families who took over the area during the war. When we stopped at Ivo's boyhood home, a Muslim family came out, and Father Ivo handed chocolate bars to all the chi dren. *Aren't these the people who killed his father?* No, he explained, these are refugees from another part of Bosnia, whose home had been destroyed in the war. He asked the man for what did he hope. To go home, he said. As we left, Father Ivo explained that the Muslim family occupying his family home has been careful to keep the cross on the wall, where it has always been.

Since that time, Father Ivo Markovic has continued t work tirelessly for dialog between religious and ethnic groups in Bosnia. A year ago in New York City he, alon with Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel, was presented the Tanenbaum Award for Interreligious Understanding. H was asked how he, a Croat, could continue to do the work of peacemaking with Muslims and Serbs. "I am n a Croat," he said. "I am Ivo."

A friend observed, "Ivo has not been captured by the Serbs, nor has his deepest loving self been murdered by the Muslims. He is free and alive, able to choose reconciliation over retaliation."

It is from such brave hearts that we should learn peac making.—FLETCHER FARRAR

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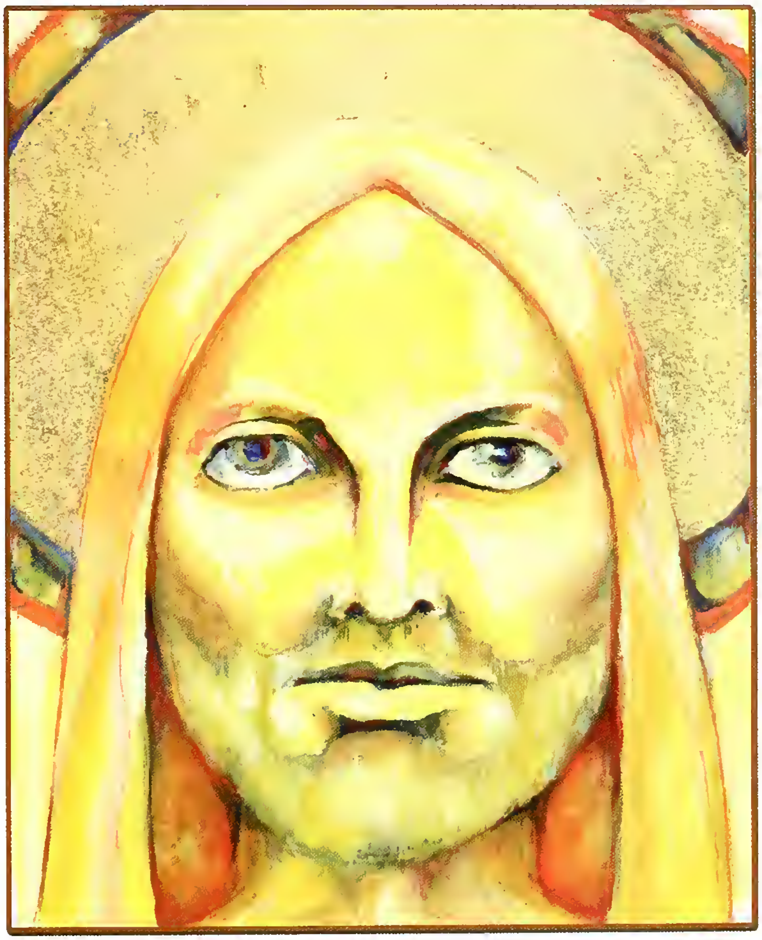
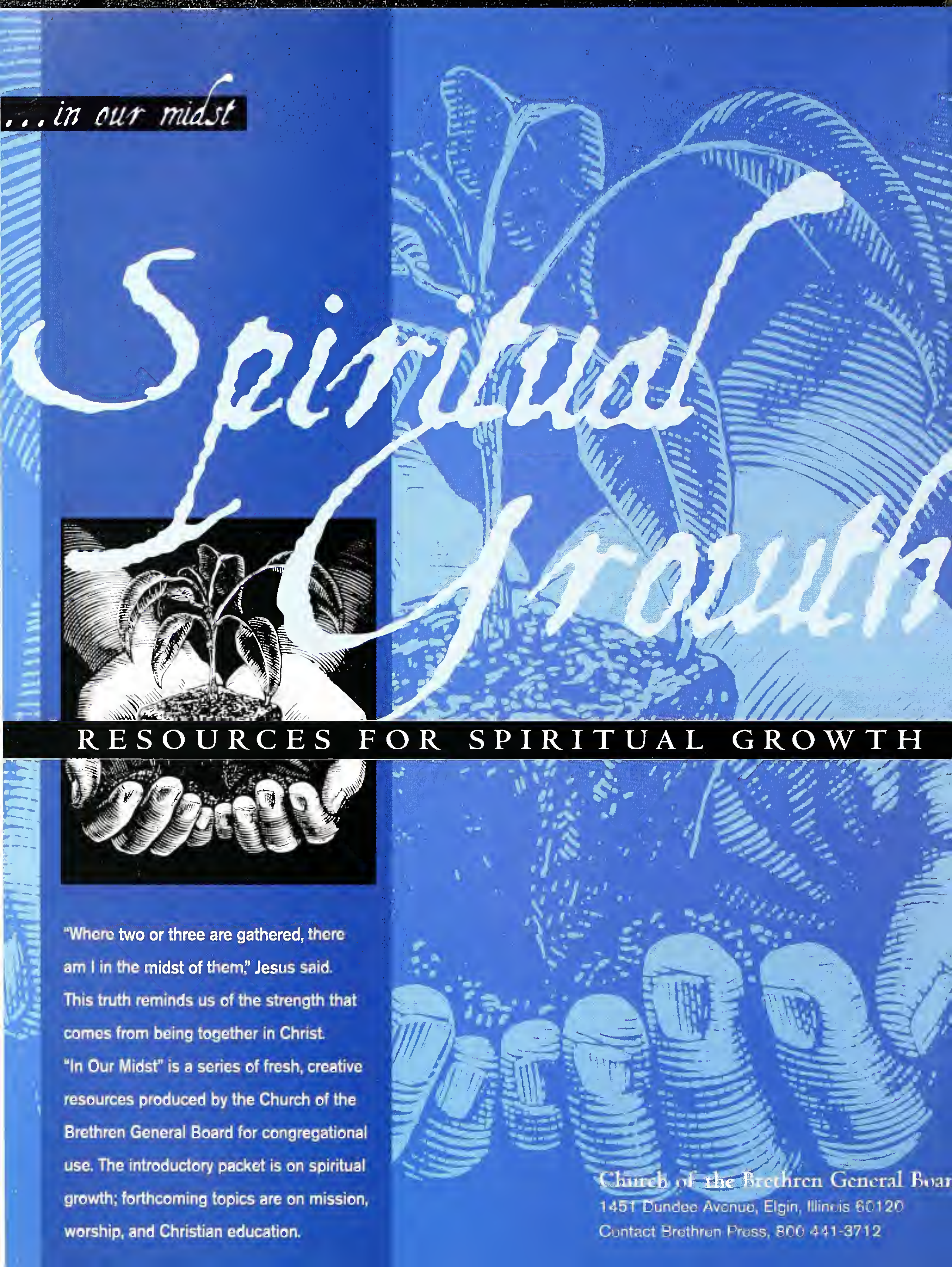


The art and ministry of Paul Grout



...in our midst

Spiritual Growth

RESOURCES FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

"Where two or three are gathered, there am I in the midst of them," Jesus said. This truth reminds us of the strength that comes from being together in Christ. "In Our Midst" is a series of fresh, creative resources produced by the Church of the Brethren General Board for congregational use. The introductory packet is on spiritual growth; forthcoming topics are on mission, worship, and Christian education.

Church of the Brethren General Boar
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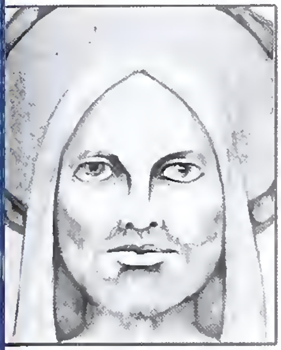

On the cover: The image is a study painting for "Ascension of Christ," by Paul Grout, Church of the Brethren pastor in Putney, Vt. We selected this from among Grout's many works because it captures the essence of what the artist is saying n his series of paintings, "Stations of the Resurrection," ow the subject of a new video. As Grout explains, "So nuch of who Jesus is comes together in the final week. The ourney into Jerusalem ultimately was toward life, not leath. To understand what life is, how life is to be found nd lived, we must see the final result of Christ's journey as is resurrection and ascension."

Phil and Louie Rieman, *at right, with staff and workers from the New Sudan Council of Churches, make preparations for an important tribal peace conference in Sudan.*

Features

12 The Paul Grout story

He inspired thousands at National Youth Conference, and his art exhibition attracted a large following this winter at Bethany Theological Seminary. A new video tells the story of his "Stations of the Resurrection." Now meet the man behind this ministry, Paul Grout, profiled for MESSENGER by Walt Wiltschek.

19 Peace conference in Sudan

Phil and Louie (Louise) Rieman, pastors in Wabash, Ind., were thrilled to get an invitation to go back to Sudan, where they had been field workers for the General Board from 1992-96. The assignment this time was to support a major peace conference between two traditionally hostile tribes. "The white bull of peace" is their fascinating story of Brethren involvement in practical peacemaking.

24 Why grandparents are so special

"Grandparents can take a young child from boredom to intense pleasure in minutes," writes Victor Stoltzfus. But it's not just what grandparents do for grandchildren that makes this relationship work so well. "Anyone who has ever taken an unhurried walk with a curious child will see the world in a new way."

26 Here's what youth have to say

More than 2,300 senior high youth responded to a survey at National Youth Conference last summer. Their answers revealed a high regard for the church and its practices. But they want more involvement and responsibility. The article is by Walt Wiltschek, who also contributed this month's cover story. When he's not writing for MESSENGER, Wiltschek works with youth as associate pastor of Westminster (Md.) Church of the Brethren.

Departments

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From the Publisher

I was heading from Indianapolis, Ind., to Springfield, Ill., when I saw a cluster of signs at the state line. One told me I had to buckle my seatbelt ("It's the law"). Another announced that the legal limit for the blood alcohol level was .08. I couldn't read the rest of the signs at 55 miles per hour because they were too close together.

Then, a readable distance later, I saw one large sign: "The people of Illinois welcome you." Despite this friendly greeting, I found myself feeling less than welcomed. Even though every rule posted made sense and was clearly for my wellbeing, I would have believed the last sign more if it had been the first.

Fresh in my mind was the meeting I had just left, a gathering of the newly named Cross-cultural Ministries Team. This team was carrying forth the vision that emerged from the urban/ethnic consultation held a few weeks earlier in Kansas City, Kan. In Kansas City, Brethren from various ethnic backgrounds told their stories and described the painful experiences they had encountered while trying to become assimilated into the Church of the Brethren. In many cases, the "rules" of the church (both written and unwritten) had spoken more loudly than the welcome.

Out of the crucible of that gathering came new inspiration to try different methods. Representatives of the various ethnic organizations agreed to work together, forming this Cross-cultural Ministries Team. There was a dogged commitment to not give up on the church. ("We are fiercely loyal to the Church of the Brethren," said one participant.) Perhaps the key strategy adopted by the team was to assume leadership for teaching the Church of the Brethren how to be multicultural.

Like many institutions, the Church of the Brethren professes a desire to be more inclusive and embrace many cultures, but it doesn't know how. We need to be taught. I believe we also need a definition of "multicultural" that represents more than first-generation, culturally ethnic immigrants. As our country rapidly changes its complexion, multicultural will come to include second- and third-generation ethnics, mixed-race people, and those who were adopted into this culture.

One idea that emerged was for members of the Cross-cultural Ministries Team meeting to host ethnic minorities at Annual Conference and make them feel welcome. Hospitality is not a new concept, of course, but it's one we can too often forget. Every newcomer, no matter what ethnic background, needs to be hosted in our congregations. Every newcomer needs a guide to interpret Church of the Brethren "culture."

We can each take the lead from this new group and practice hospitality to those who come into our midst. Isn't that what each of us hopes for when we are looking for a home?

Wendy McFadden

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Messenger is now available o the World Wide Web at www.brethren.org/genbd/messengr/index.htm

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In Touch

Bridgewater names award for Dale Ulrich

A new award has been created at Bridgewater (Va.) College in honor of Dale Ulrich, a 38-year member of the faculty and longtime member of Bridgewater Church of the Brethren.

The Dale V. Ulrich Award for Excellence in Physics recognizes Ulrich, professor of physics and former dean and provost. This year's recipient, senior Matthew Whitaker of Parkersburg, W.Va., received a plaque during the annual Academic Awards Convocation.

McPherson receives $1.75 million match

McPherson (Kan.) College has received a $1.75 million grant from the J.E. and L.E. Mabee Foundation of Tulsa, Okla., in fulfillment of a challenge grant issued by the foundation in April 1998. If the college raised $2.8 million from March 1998 to April 1999 for "Enhancing the Legacy," its current capital campaign, Mabee would contribute $1.75 million.

The college raised over $3.5 million. As part of this campaign, the college is constructing a new fine arts center, science facility, and performance hall.

Districts process 27,495 cans of beef

This year's annual meat canning project by Mid-Atlantic and Southern Pennsylvania districts yielded 27,495 cans of beef from 50,000 pounds of meat that was processed April 5-10. A quarter of the cans will be distributed throughout each district, 25 percent will go to Christian Aid Ministries (the agency where the meat was canned), and 25 percent is tentatively scheduled to go to Korea, El Salvador, and Kosovo.

About 250 volunteers from both districts worked on this year's canning project.

rethren Peace Fellowship *nnual banquet. From left re Wayne Zunkel, editor rethren Peace Fellowship ewsletter; SueZann osler; Roy and Violet faltzgraff; James Gibbel, PF chair; and Kenneth reider, BPF treasurer.*

Peace Fellowship honors missionaries to Nigeria

The Brethren Peace Fellowship held its 33rd annual dinner meeting at Brethren Village, Neffsville, Pa., April 8. SueZann Bosler of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., served as keynote speaker. At that meeting, Roy and Violet Pfaltzgraff, 30-year missionaries to Nigeria, were honored as Brethren Peacemakers of the Year. Violet served as a nurse and teacher; Roy is a leading authority on leprosy.

The Brethren Peace Fellowship is an independent initiative of a group of Church of the Brethren members.

Youth take live report "On the Road Again"

Illinois/Wisconsin District has joined the General Board's Live Report "On the Road" brigade. A drama/music troupe of youth is preparing to perform "Web Connection," a multimedia presentation of General Board activities around the world. This troupe joins groups from

Northern and Southern Ohio that have prepared similar performances this year.

Rehearsing May 1-2 in Elgin, Ill., were Cyndi Fecher and Kelsey Swanson of Highland Ave. Church of the Brethren, Elgin; Cathy Gilbert of Peoria (Ill.) Church of the Brethren; and Corrine Lipscomb of First Church of the Brethren, Springfield, Ill. This troupe will travel to Fort Wayne, Ind., on June 13, to perform at Beacon Heights Church of the Brethren.

According to Beth Sollenberger Morphew, coordinator of the General Board's Area Two Congregational Life Team and the group's sponsor, the youth are open to performing elsewhere to "share the story of the General Board's work." Contact Sollenberger Morphew at 800-323-8039.

courtesy The Floyd Press

A ministry of reading to kids: *Wanda Hubbard, Floyd County, Va., school board member and a member of the Topeco Church of the Brethren, Floyd, Va., donned a Dr. Seuss hat and read to kindergarteners during a "Read Across America" program in March. Hubbard is "one of the most talented worship and special program designers I have ever seen," says David Shumate, Virlina district executive.*

Fellowship groups meet in Tennessee

Sixty-six Church of the Brethren members representing nine congregations attended this year's annual Southeastern district women's and men's fellowship's combined meeting April 26 at Jonesborough, Tenn. Host pastor Curtis Rhudy, a bell choir, and a number of vocalists and musicians led the opening worship service.

Julie Hostetter, coordinator of the General Board's Area Three Congregational Life Team, led a session on Annual Conference's recent Ethics for Congregations paper. The offering raised $366, which will be sent to the General Board's Emergency Response/ Service Ministries to assist with refugee programs in Albania and Macedonia.

Cultural Center gets historic cupboard

The Valley Brethren-Mennonite Cultural Center has received a large Rockingham County corner cupboard from the estate o Harold R. Kline. It was on the Kline homestead, a Brethren mill farm, and may have come from the family of Elder John Kline, a key figure in Brethren history from the Civil War period.

Daily News-Record, Harrisonburg, Va

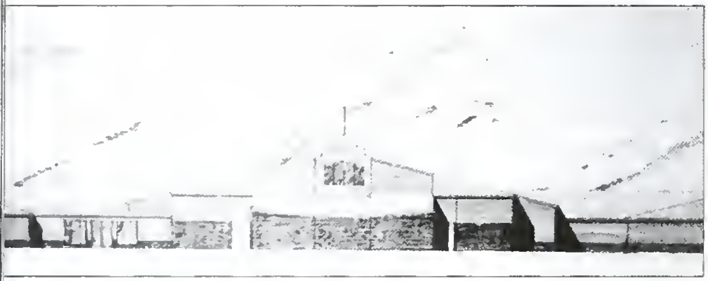
Ruth Greenawalt, *librarian at the Alexander Mack Library at Bridgewater College, notes the large dimensions of the Kline family corner cupboard.*

The cupboard, which is i near original condition, wil be exhibited in the Alexander Mack Library at Bridgewater (Va.) College. The Valley Brethren-Mennonite Cultural Center, a recently formed group, hopes to build a permanent home for the cupboard and other artifacts on land donated for that purpose at Harrisonburg, Va. —Doris J. Showalter

Community center puts faith to work

The Wilmington (Del.) *News Journal* recently featured the work of the Richardson Park Community Action Program, an organization founded 30 years ago by the Wilmington Church of the Brethren, along with two other congregations, which continues to be a major part of the church's local outreach efforts.

RPCAP runs a thrift shop for affordable clothing and household goods, a Brown Bag Club that provides food to the needy, a monthly foot clinic for the elderly, and numerous other programs for people in need. "I think for a lot of us, it is a sense of what it means to be a Christian," said A. Lee Kinsey, a board member of RPCAP and pastor of the Wilmington congregation. "It is a hands-on kind of ministry. And we're supposed to live our faith."



Construction begins on Manchester church

Manchester Church of the Brethren, North Manchester, Ind., has broken ground for its new building, which will replace the facility that burned last year. The building will be on a hill near the center of a 25-acre parcel of land the congregation purchased. It will be 46,500 square fee all on one level, and it includes a Family Life Center. There will be 180 parking spaces. Heating and cooling for the building will be provided by a closed loop geothermal systerm. The exterior of the building will be a combination of brick and vinyl siding.

Conestoga Church of the Brethren's *present meetinghouse was built in 1994.*

November events planned for Conestoga 275th anniversary

The Conestoga congregation, Leola, Pa., this year is celebrating 275 years as an organized congregation. For over a hundred years the worship services were held in homes and love feasts were held in barns. The first buildings used for worship were union houses, which were used by several denominations.

The first meeting house built by the Conestoga congregation was built in 1860. There are records of five different meetinghouses being used by the congregation. The building in Bareville, Pa., was built in 1915, with additions and remodeling taking place in 1951 and 1959. The outlying meetinghouses were sold and worship was centralized in Bareville (Leola) through the years until the last one was sold in 1946. The present church was built in 1994.

The Conestoga congregation invites all former pastors, members, and friends to join it for its anniversary weekend Nov. 13-14. Guest speaker will be Lowell Flory, 1999 moderator of the Church of the Brethren. For more information call 717-656-2493, or e-mail Conestogacob @church.com. —Nancy Wile

*"In Touch" profiles Brethren we would like you to meet. Send story ideas and photos to "In Touch," *Messenger*, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120.*

News

Youth prepare health kits by the hundreds for Kosovo

Response to the ongoing crisis in the Balkans continues throughout the Church of the Brethren in many different ways. The Ashland (Ohio) Dickey church in May provided one example of effective witness. May Patalano explains:

HELP SEND
Personal Items
and Health Kits
to KOSOVO REFUGEES
PE

When Kosovo refugees *needed help, Ashland, Ohio, youth went into action. Here, from left, Michelle McNaull, Sharla Zuercher, and Rachelle Matz hand out fliers outside the local Wal-Mart listing needs for health kits.*

"When the e-mail appeal for personal items and health kits for Kosovo refugees was received, Ashland Dickey members went into action. A challenge was put forth to the congregation at the April 25 worship service to bring enough items to fill the church vestibule the following Sunday.

"A youth then had an idea. High school freshman Rachelle Matz and I, Ashland Dickey's youth advisor, went to the local Wal-Mart the following day with two requests. We wanted permission to hand out fliers to customers with the list of refugee needs, and we wanted to set up a table to receive these items at the exit. The manager was very receptive and granted permission for the youth to be at the store from April 27 through May 1.

"Each day, the youth set up their stations for four hours inside and outside the store. During the project enough items and monetary donations were received to assemble 243 health kits, including a large number of additional personal items. When the congregation met for worship on May 2, members continued to bring their own contributions. The final tally was 337 health kits and a large number of personal items.

"On the previous Sunday, a challenge had been extended for someone to personally deliver the items to the Brethren Service Center in New Windsor, Md. Mike and Cindy McNaull were led by the spirit and they departed at 4 p.m., May 2, with their minivan full of the donations. They arrived in New Windsor on May 3.

"This experience was a wonderful point of celebration for the youth, culminating coincidentally on National Youth Sunday, where they led the worship service using the theme "Spirit, Lead the Way!"

A faithful church responds to Kosovo crisis on many fronts

The Church of the Brethren General Board's Emergency Response/Service Ministries in May was working to respond to Kosovar refugees preparing to resettle in the US.

Meanwhile, $10,000 of a $13,000 Emergency Disaster Fund grant is supporting a new short-term Church of the Brethren/Quaker initiative created to respond to the refugee crisis in Kosovo. These funds are being used by Brethren Volunteer Service worker Gail Long to purchase and then deliver relief supplies to Kosovar refugees.

Long, who served as a BVSer in the Balkans from January 1995 through September 1997, returned to the region in April to lead this project. Long has visited several refugee camps. With other relief aid activists, she delivered about 100 boxes of apples, 50 kilos of chickpeas, sanitary napkins, 10 kilos of coffee, and pens, paper, and plastic sheeting to three camps.

The remaining $3,000 is being used by ER/SM to support special Kosovar refugee projects.

ER/SM has been requested to assess the need for child care at the Refugee Reception Center at Fort Dix in Trenton, N.J. Jean Myers of Sinking Springs, Pa., and Patricia Ronk of Roanoke, Va., were there to assess the kind of child care to provide.

With the announcement that up to 20,000 refugees will be permitted to relocate in the United States provided they already have family members here, ER/SM is prepared to assist in the relocation of refugees in the Baltimore, Md., region, should such assistance be requested. Churches or individuals wishing to sponsor a refugee should contact ER/SM at 800-451-4407 ext. 733.

Eric Thompson

Brethren were among *some 3,500 demonstrators who protested May 1-3 at the Pentagon and the US Capitol against the School of the Americas. The school is a US Army training ground for Latin American and Caribbean soldiers at Fort Benning, in Columbus, Ga. Graduates have been linked to numerous human rights violations. Among the Brethren involved in the protest, from left, are Greg Laszokovits, Kristin Grimes, Kim Stuckey, Andreas Peschke, Tina Rieman, and Torin Eikenberry.*

In April the Church of the Brethren contributed $140,000 to a $1.8 million appeal by Church World Service for assistance in the former Yugoslavia. CWS released $265,000 to provide 15,000 blankets, 10,000 bed linens, 2,000 mattresses, and 5,000 pillows and cases. CWS had already sent $100,000 for blankets and bedding and $800,000 for tents, blankets, and mattresses, which are being purchased in Albania.

The Brethren Service Center in New Windsor, Md., is busy receiving and sending material aid to assist with humanitarian efforts in the area of conflict. Eight trucks full of supplies, which included 1,260 tents and 1,600 bales of woolen blankets, were shipped to Skopje, Macedonia, on April 17-18 on behalf of the US Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance.

During this frenetic time the Brethren Service Center also shipped seven 40-foot containers with 1,875 bales of quilts and 750 bales of sweaters to Armenia for Lutheran World Relief.

Response to the NATO air strikes has also come from across the church: Middle Pennsylvania District Witness Commission and Disaster Response Committee has committed $27,000 to provide 1,000 of the family gift kits.

Coventry Church of the Brethren of Pottstown, Pa., scheduled a Proclamation and Prayer for Peace service on May 2.

About 175 people attended an ecumenical peace vigil April 14 at Highland Avenue Church of the Brethren, Elgin, Ill. A community prayer vigil was organized by the Sunnyslope Church of the Brethren-United Church of Christ on April 11, which was attended by about 60 people of various faith traditions. The Ankeny (Iowa) church has been holding a Prayers for Peace service one evening each week. And the Williamson Road church, Roanoke, Va., held a Good Friday evening prayer service.

About 50 participants of the Christian Citizenship Seminar held a prayer vigil April 13 in front of the White House. Participants made protest signs and some of the youth led the readings and the prayers. The vigil concluded with the spontaneous singing of "Freedom" while others knelt in prayer.

On May 15 at York Center Church of the Brethren, Lombard, Ill., Bob Williamson of the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center presented a peace church perspective on the conflict, based on his visits to Serbia. The church is asking its members to learn "the facts behind television pictures" and to carry "a strong message of human need to our local communities."

Workers and funds help needy in US and worldwide

Church of the Brethren Disaster Child Care teams began taking care of children in Wichita, Kan., and in Oklahoma City, Okla., within days after devastating tornadoes struck the Plains region May 3.

A $10,000 grant from the General Board's Emergency Disaster Fund was allocated immediately following the storms. This money was used to send assessors to Oklahoma and Kansas to determine the General Board's Emergency Response/Service Ministries response. Stanley Noffsinger, incoming ER/SM manager, and Byron Frantz, Western Plains District disaster coordinator, were on the scene in Wichita; Cheryl and Doug Dekker, trained disaster child care givers from Norfolk, Neb., and Golan Winkler, Southern Plains District disaster response coordinator, were in Oklahoma City.

Child care centers were established in both cities by ER/SM at the request of the American Red Cross.

In the meantime, ER/SM also sent 200 blankets to Oklahoma in response to a Church World Service appeal.

Hurricane Georges emergency response work coordinated by ER/SM entered a new phase in April. A new project opened in Biloxi, Miss., to assist with rebuilding projects still needed in the wake of last September's storm that tore through the Caribbean and onto the Mississippi Coast. Many rural poor and elderly families in Biloxi suffered flood, wind, and water damage to their homes. ER/SM's work will involve major repairs, with the possibility of one or two rebuilds.

ER/SM's other ongoing Hurricane Georges response efforts continue in Caimito and Castañer, Puerto Rico; and in San Juan, Dominican Republic. Related grants include:

- $50,000 in support of emergency food relief and long-term reconstruction programs in the Dominican Republic.
- $37,000 in support of the shipping of medical supplies to the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Honduras by CWS.
- $20,000 in support of the new Biloxi, Miss., project.

Three additional Emergency Disaster Fund grants include:

- $15,000 in support of the CWS response to the December California freeze that damaged citrus and seasonal crops and affected up to 28,000 workers. These funds will help provide direct aid to affected families.
- $10,000 in support of the CWS response to the Jan. 25 earthquake in Colombia, which killed 1,300 people These funds will help provide shelter for 700 families, seismic-resistant housing, sanitation, tools, economic regeneration, and food.
- $10,000 in support of the CWS response to food shortages and malnutrition in Sudan. These funds will support a long-term food security and agricultural rehabilitation program.

As of May, 15 EDF grants have been allocated this year totaling $385,360.

A $15,000 Global Food Crisis grant has been allocated for use in Viajama, Dominican Republic, home to one of the earliest DR Church of the Brethren congregations. There is a food crisis in Viajama due to damage of crops and fields caused by last fall's Hurricane Georges. Some $12,000 will be used in direct food aid and $3,000 will go toward legal fees.

One hundred metric tons of seed potatoes were shipped from Denver to North Korea on April 28 as part o a new initiative launched by eight US humanitarian relief and development agencies, including CWS. The total initiative consists of 1,000 metric tons of seed potatoes that will be distributed on farms throughout several North Korean provinces.

Additionally, a 100,000-metric-ton food-for-work program, with commodities provided by USAID and the US Department of Agriculture, will support the seed potato initiative. The 100,000 metric tons of food marks the first bilateral aid given by the United States to North Korea. The Church of the Brethren General Board, through its Global Food Crisis Fund, contributed $45,000 to this initiative.

New leaders to serve the church in numerous roles

Robert Blake will join the Association of Brethren Caregivers as program field staff beginning July 15. In this role, Blake will provide staff leadership for Denominational Deacon, Family Life, Lafiya, and Voice ministries.

Blake has served two years on ABC's Lafiya Steering Committee. Blake, who will succeed June Gibble upon her retirement from ABC July 4, has worked 19 years as director of the pastoral care department and chaplain at Sherman Hospital, Elgin, Ill. He is a licensed Church of the Brethren minister and former pastor.

Marisa Yoder, of the Goshen City (Ind.) congregation, will begin a one-year assignment with the General Board's Brethren Witness office this summer. National high school Teacher of the Year in her field of soil and water, Yoder will provide environmental education to groups across the denomination, while assisting the office in organizing a network of creation stewardship advocates.

Yoder will volunteer for the General Board as part of her sabbatical year from teaching.

Dale Minnich has been named executive director of college operations at McPherson College. In this capacity, he will also serve as the college's chief financial officer, directing the college's financial and physical plant operations. Minnich has been director of planned giving since 1997. Previously he served on the General Board staff for 22 years.

Janine Katonah began April 1 as interim executive for Illinois/Wisconsin District. She has been a member of the district's board and ministry commission. Katonah served on the General Board stewardship staff 1979-80.

STATE
DON'T KILL for ME

Jim and Bonnie Martin *were among those who protested against the death penalty at the Pennsylvania State Capitol May 1.*

Brethren family joins protest to support son on death row

Jim and Bonnie Martin, members of Spring Creek Church of the Brethren, Hershey, Pa., made their voices heard May 1 at the Pennsylvania State Capitol along with about 200 others.

Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge has been speeding up the number of executions in the state and the Martins' son, Brad, currently sits on death row awaiting lethal injection. At the Capitol, the demonstrators, which included the Martins and about 10 other Church of the Brethren members, protested against the death penalty. They called for a two-year moratorium on executions.

Impassioned participants included attorneys who have worked on death penalty cases and issues, death row survivors, people with family members on death row, and musical performers. All called attention to the seeming inequity of death penalty sentences and executions, which often appear to be based on income levels and race.

Speakers also cited those who have been executed on death row only to be found innocent after their death. Upon leaving the Capitol, rally participants then marched to the governor's residence chanting and singing.

While the Martins do not want to see their son die, they do believe justice must be served. Jim Martin says, "A penalty has to be paid, but not the death penalty. It's time that we discuss the issue again in our churches and our society. We need to be more knowledgeable."

On May 3, eight days before Brad's scheduled execution, the Martin family was informed that Brad received a stay of execution by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

"The Martins remain anxious, but hopeful and supported," said Greg Laszakovits, who is working on death penalty issues this year for the Church of the Brethren General Board's Brethren Witness office and who joined the Martins at the Harrisburg demonstration.

Said Bonnie Martin, "We know we're not alone. God and others have been there for us." The Brethren Witness Office will soon be asking congregations and individuals to get involved in this matter through a letter-writing and petition-signing campaign urging Governor Ridge to stop the killing in Pennsylvania.

The 1987 Church of the Brethren "Annual Conference Statement on the Death Penalty" states that "Our Christian sense of justice compels us to abolish the death penalty." For more information on abolishing the death penalty, call Greg Laszakovits at 800-323-8039.

Youth put faith into action at Christian Citizenship Seminar

More than 100 youth and youth advisors from across the country attended the annual Christian Citizenship Seminar April 10-15, sponsored by the Youth/Young Adult Ministries office and the Church of the Brethren Washington office.

"Handle With Care" was the theme for this year's seminar, which focused on stewardship of God's creation. The seminar began in New York City before moving to Washington, D.C., for the last two days of the event.

Speakers included Brethren Witness director David Radcliff, who provided the keynote address; Marisa Yoder, high school teacher and youth leader from the Goshen City (Ind.) congregation; and Lynne West of the Eco-justice office of the National Council of Churches of Christ.

Participants worshiped in a variety of multicultural congregations on Sunday morning, toured the United Nations, visited their congressional representatives while in the nation's capital, and used free time to explore the two cities.

Partners in Accompaniment sends two to Guatemala

Sandy Summers of the Ephrata (Pa.) congregation and Sarah Stafford of the Oakland (Ohio) congregation are the latest in a series of Brethren-sponsored "accompaniers" to go to Guatemala through the Church of the Brethren Partners in Accompaniment program.

Their role is to live in communities of returned Guatemalan refugees, providing a visible symbol of international support and a measure of security in this land still recovering from more that 35 years of civil war.

An additional role of the accompaniers, who spend three months or more in their community, is to provide a link to stateside congregations or other supporting groups. These groups in turn visit the community, uphold the community in prayer, and provide financial support for the accompanier.

A July delegation to Guatemala is being led by Tom Benevento, former Brethren Volunteer Service worker in Guatemala now with the Global Mission Partnerships office of the General Board.

Partners in Accompaniment is a project of the General Board's Office of Brethren Witness, in cooperation with the non-profit Guatemalan Accompaniment Project of Washington, D.C.

OEPA still planning to move offices from New Windsor

The On Earth Peace Assembly board of directors met for its spring board retreat at Shepherd's Spring Outdoor Ministries Center, Sharpsburg, Md., April 16-18.

During its meetings, the board:

•reaffirmed its March 1997 decision to leave the Brethren Service Center in New Windsor, Md., and called a new site committee, giving it the mandate to recommend a new OEPA headquarters site to the board at its October meeting.

• developed mission statements, investment strategies, and regulations for its endowments.

• endorsed the idea of an annual Reconciliation Sunday for Church of the Brethren congregations, and directed staff to pursue plans to implement such a program.

• affirmed cooperation with the Church of the Brethren Womaen's Caucus and the Brethren/Mennonite Council for Lesbian and Gay Concerns in areas where OEPA's mission coincides with the groups' activities.

In program reports from staff, the board heard:

• plans for OEPA's five-day 25th birthday celebration in late October. Promotional and registration information will be distributed in May.

• OEPA is working cooperatively with Mennonite denominations to develop a peace curriculum for congregations.

• OEPA is a collaborating partner in the development and sponsorship of the Western Christian Peacemaking Conference, scheduled for Oct. 8-11 at George Fox University.

The board also met with its seven-member Ministry of Reconciliation steering committee and heard numerous reports on MoR activities.

Take The Pledge

Amy Adkins
LaDonna Alexander
Thomas Allbaugh
Luke Allender
Martha Anderegg
Lois Anderson
April Angel
Ruth Angle
Robbie Arnold
Jason Arnold
Shalon Atwood
Eliza Aucherman
Ruth Aukerman
Gerald Baile Crouse
Jodi Bailey
Ann Baker
Donald Baker
Maria Banks
Lorraine Bard
Andrea Barnhart
Cleona Barr
Ernie Barr
Jessica Bauman
Sarah Leigh
Baumgardner
R. Keith Beckner
Alyson Beery
Tiffany Bevins
Krista Bibbee
Allen Bierbower
Karen Bierbower
Shalom Black
Grace Black
Leah Blackwood
Alice Blair
Wendell Bohrer
Joan Bohrer
Ben Bohrer
Allyson Bomberger
Stefan Bomberger
Rebecca Bonham
Marceil Boone
Lee Bowman
Rebecca Bowman
Maria Bowman
Christopher Bowman
Michelle Bowman
Andre Bowman
Juli Anne Bowser
Sloughfy
Elizabeth Bradley
Heather Brandt
Lana Bricker
Dean Bricker
Cynthia Brogan Brown
Patricia Bross
Gregory Brown
Jenn Brown
Allison Bryan
Rachel Bucher
Glena Buchholtz
Don Buchholtz
Amanda Bunting
Alexia Burchett
Linda Burkholder
Ray Burkholder
Julie Burtz
Peg Byard
Marshall Camden
Ted Carlin
Sulynn Carlin
Kim Carter
Jeffrey Carter
L. Clyde Carter, Jr.
Deanna Castle
Andrew Chaney
Ruth Clark
Lois Clark
Eldon Coffman
Daniel Cohick
Linda Collins
Jason Cook

Katie Cosner
Mary Cox
Sam Cox
Ben Cox
Jane Cox
Mark Craddock
Greg Cunningham
Lois Davidson
Tim Davis
Amanda Davis
Amanda Davis
L.R. Davis
Glenn Deardorff
Nancy Deardorff
Wesley DeCoursey
Audrey DeCoursey
Casey Delano
Attelus Delima
Heather Derr
Brandi DeShong
Rhonda DeShong
Lisa Dieterly
Earl Dilbert
Isaac Dill
Mabel Diller
Peter Dobberstein
Howard Nevin
Domer
Jenny Dormois
Judy Dotterer
J Ebener
Miriam Eberly
Roger W Eberly
Val Ehersole
Austin Eikenberry
George Eisele
Jerel Ellen
Jessica Eller
Laura Emrick
Jodi Eshleman
Sonia Ewald
Dianne Eyler
Jeffery Fackler
Dean Feasenhiser
Joel Fennel
Patrick Fiegenbaum
Rhonda Fike
Stutzman
Vivian Fisher
Brian Fitzgerald
Brian Flory
Alison Flory
Anthony Ford
Peter Fox
Mark Fox
Amy Nicole Fox
Michael Frantz
Doris Fritz
Zach Fritz
Kathleen Fry-Miller
Margaret Fuchs
Janet Funderburg
Cindy Funderburg
Chris Funderburg
Sandra Funderburg
Tara Gagliardo
Amy Gall Ritchie

Don Gallagher
Bettie Rae Gallagher
Susan Ganger
Jeffrey Garber
Mary Gault
Chris Gaylor
Dorothy German
Kenneth Gibble
Ann Earhart Gibble
Sarah Gilliam
Mildred Gillian
Connie Gindlesperger
Jean Gindlesperger
Lucy Godbey
Christopher Good
Rebecca Good
Jessica Graves
Harry Graybill
Jane Taylor
Greenfield
Ken Gresh
Kristin Grimes
Helen Groff
Lloyd Groff
Anna Lisa Gross
Marta Grove
Terri Guy
Matthew Guynn
Rebecca Hade
Katie Haman
Sherri Haman
Edward Haman
Louise Hampton
Deb Hansell
Faulkner
Norman Harsh
Stanley Harter
John Harvey
Linda Hawk
Fae Heckert
Charity Heffner
Cecilia Heneberry
Leonard Herman
Earl Hess
Eugene Hess
Matt Hess
Anita Hess
Amanda Hitt
Calvin H Hlavaty
Robin Hockenberry
Dave Hoffman
Eric Hoffman
Michael Hogan II
Susan Hoke
Mary Holderman
David Holderman
Alan Holderread
Becky Hollenberg
Heather Holt
Jacob Hoover
David Hoover
Benjamin Hoover
Jonathan Hoover
Susan Hoover
Andrew Hostetler
Amy Householder
Deana Hoyt

Erica Hoyt
Kelly Hoyt
Donald Hubbell
Jane Hughes
Jonathan Hurst
Nathan Huston
Wendy Jackson
Lesli Jamison
Dean Johnson
Grace Johnson
Lyla Johnson
Lisa Johnston
Paul Jones
Sarah Jordan
Shannon Jorgensen
Karl Joseph
Cary Jossart
Jean Karn
Erin Karn
Colleen Karn
Marta Kaufman
Ratko Kaurin
Annie Kaylor
Rebecca Kearney
Miriam Keckler
Sarah Keegan
Matthew Keeling
Lindsay Keeney
William Kilgore
Robin Kilgore
Cliff Kindy
Maria King
Steve Kinzie
Nancy Kline
Philip Knaub
Tawnya Knierim
Terry Koons
Carol Koons
Glenn Koons
Minerva Koser
David Krieger
Janice Kulp Long
Ben Landis
Virginia Landis
Menno Landis
Rachel Landis
Eugene Lantz
Brandon Lantz
Jodie Laughlin
Grace Lefever
Jessica Kate Lehman
Cliff Litwiller
Melinda Long
Johanna Long
John Long
Benjamin Long
Rachel Long
Andrew Loomis
Leonard Lowe
Viola Lowe
Erica Luckenbill
Florence Mackey
Kenneth Mackey
Joyce Mackey
Wilbur Mackey

Kevin Magnan
Doug Mangum
Kira Marriner
Emily Martin
Ruby Martin
Justine Martinez
Sam Mason
Mary Mason
Tiffany Mason
Wendy Matheny
Melissa McAllister
Greg McAvoy
Jeff McAvoy
Meghan McCann
Erin McCourt
Edward McCullough
Laina McKellip
Lloyd McLucas
Shirley McMillin
Stephanie McRoberts
Derrick Method
Madalyn Metzger
Grace Meyers
Donna Meyers
Stephanie Michael
Carolyn Michael
John Miller
Irene Miller
Miranda Miller
Sarah Miller
Leslie Miller
Maureen Miller
Abby Miller
Tiffany Mills
Jane Mills
Beverly Monji
Karen Montegomer
Daniel Moore
Byron E. Moore
Lorene A Moore
Ashley Morgan
Brandon Moyer
Rachel Myers
Rachel Myers
Ruth Myers
Robin Naft
Sharon Nearhoof
Jill Neiheisel
Genevieve Newman
Jared Ness
Justin Nichols
Deborah Nimz
Alfred P Nyce
Geneva O'Cull
June Oakes
June Oakes
Janet Oher Miller
Wayne Oellig
Phoebe Oellig
Tina Osswald
Anne Palmer
Brenda Shenk
Palsgrove
Ollievia Patterson
Donna Peachey
Conrad Peachey
Chester Peckover

Jonah Pence
Rachel Grace Pennell
Beth Phelps
Jacqueline Picking
Nicole Piper
Reid Pletcher
Anna Pomazal
Renee Preso
Brooke Pyles
Robert Pyles
Kairee Pyles
Teresa Pyles
Tami Pyles
Carolyn Pyles
Michael Rager
Alison Rager
Charlotte Ranck
Tasara Redekopp
Travis Reich
Troy Reimer
Beth Rhodes
Frank Rhodes
Roberta Rinker
Jamie Risser
Kurt Ritchie
Bernard Ritchie
Pearl Rohrer
Becky Rotz
Rhonda Rotz
Lynn Rotz
Lynn Rotz
Ann Royer
Connie Royer
Anne Royer Royer
Riki Rumer
Laura Rutledge
Keith Rutter
Pamela Rutter
Melissa Sager
Nancy Sallurday
David Sanders
Naomi Sayer Shelton
John Schafer
Steve Schatz
Lucinda Schuler
Katie Seward
Chris Shaffer
Robert Shank
Ruth E. Shantz
Linda Sharar
Amy Sharp
Lois Shattuck
Virgina Sheets
Amos J. Sheets
Thomas Sheffer
Sara Shencovich
Josh Shewn
Karen Shively Neff
Heather Shively
Brian Shoup
Sarah Shreckhise
Richard Shreiner
Heather Simmons
Ronald Siney
Barbara Siney
Raechel Sittig
Morgan Skiles

Clint Slipher
Kari Smith
Nate Smith
Lori Waas Smith
Darlene Smith
Laura Snider
Tony Snyder
Karen Snyder
Ray Sollenberger
Elaine Sollenberger
Shiela Souders
David Souders
Kendra Sousley
Derrick Spangler
Coreen Spencer
Steve Spire
Sarah Stafford
Philip Stafford
Karen Statler
Nancy Steedle
Dustin Stein
Sarah Steiner
Robert Stiles
Marion Stoltzfus
Laura Stoltzfus
Esther Stoltzfus
Laura Stone
Matt Stone
Jenny Stover
Eileen Studebaker
Jessica Suiter
Callie Surber
Glenn Swope
Sarah Taylor
Cynthia Taylor
Diana Thomas
Galen Toews
Rhonda Tomlinson
Lorna Toms
Richard Travis
Jay Tucker
Emily Tulli
Mary Uhrig
Howard Uhrig
Howard Ullery
Becky Ullom
Joel Ulrich
Michelle Ungemach
Stacie Unruh
Lori Van Order
Bryan Vance
Carol Varner
Kelly Vocke
Al Vocke
Joy Vocke
Rachael Waas Smith
Becky Walker
Fred Wampler
Emily Wampler
Mandy Wampler
Joyce Ward
Bryan Wave
Ineke Way
E. Paul Weaver
Dana Welch
Myrtle Wells
Randall Westfall
Angie Weybright
Kara Whistler
Andrew Widdowson
Mark Wilhelm
Joan Williams
Eileen Wilson
Mike Wimmer
Lois Wine
Marlin Wine
Allison Wolfe
Lou Anne Wray
Anita Wucinic-Turner
Dale Yoder
Jodi Youtz
Paul Zimmerman

I WON'T FIGHT TO KILL

I WILL oppose injustice
I WILL oppose hatred
I WILL oppose racism
I WILL oppose hunger
I WILL oppose to make
sure that everyone
has what they need
to live as God intends

I. JUST.
WON'T. FIGHT. TO. KILL.

The White Rose

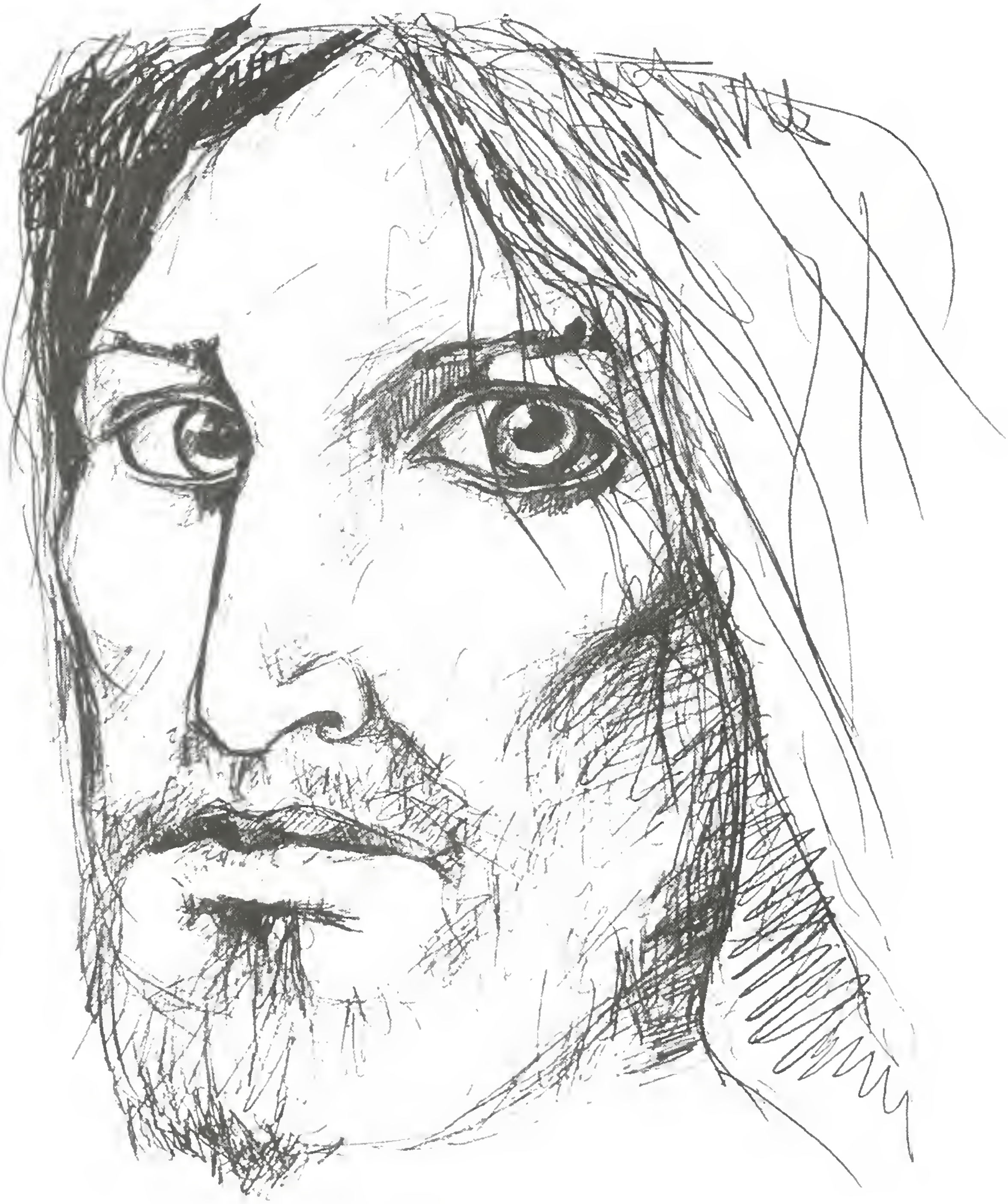
In the early 1940's, youthful members of the German White Rose were put to death for daring to cry out publicly against the evils of Nazism and its racist war machine As members of the privileged Aryan racial group, they could have remained silent and safe They chose instead, in spite of great risk, to make their values known to the citizens of their nation. In memory of the spirit of their courage in speaking out, the White Rose has been chosen as the symbol for the "Take the Pledge" campaign

To Take The Pledge, contact
The Office of Brethren Witness, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120-1694; 1-800-323-8039; Email: Witness_gb@Brethren.org.

The art and ministry of Paul Grout

His journey from Genesis to the Resurrection

by Walt Wiltschek



A study drawing for "Peter Denies Jesus."
Jesus turns to look at Peter after his third denial.

Good things are happening at the Genesis Church of the Brethren, the denomination's lone outpost in Vermont. Attendance has been strong, enthusiasm is running high, and numerous new programs have been starting — particularly ones geared toward evangelism.

For all that success, however, the congregation's pastor, Paul Grout, is quick to say Genesis isn't some perfect paradise. He says it's had its struggles and failures just like every other church.

That's okay, though, because perfection in itself isn't what concerns Grout. Following the example of the One who was perfect, and helping others to follow it, does.

"They're all about the same thing," Grout said of the myriad programs at Genesis, "giving ourselves to Christ. The foundation . . . is Christ."

That foundation has been at the base of Grout's life since the beginning, when he was growing up in the Presbyterian church in Pennsylvania. Many other things have changed, but following Christ has remained at the center.

Grout, 53, said through his leadership experiences and camp programs in a youth group setting he had already begun then to feel a tug toward the ministry. That continued while he studied art at Kutztown University near Allentown, Pa., and as he taught art for five years at Manheim Township High School in Neffsville, Pa., near Lancaster.

Jeff Leard

Paul Grout

It was during that time in the late 1960s that Grout and his wife, Dorothy, discovered the Church of the Brethren in Lititz. They were concerned about issues happening in the country in the Vietnam era and felt the Brethren addressed some of those concerns.

"We very quickly felt that we'd found a home," Grout said. "We had found a group of people attempting to live out what they believe. We wanted to live out a New Testament faith."

And so they became part of the Lititz congregation and began to learn more. Grout admitted feeling a bit disillusioned when he attended his first Annual Conference and watched the business there, but it didn't dissuade him and his wife from feeling a connection to the Brethren.

"All through our experience we felt a great love for the church," Grout said, "and that continues, locally and denominationally."

Through the Brethren Grout eventually did respond to his call

The growing congregation *of Genesis Church of the Brethren, Putney, Vt.*

toward ministry, too, and he and Dorothy left their teaching positions so that he could attend Bethany Theological Seminary in the early 1970s.

They made financial plans to make it possible, then received an extra blessing when their first daughter, Jenny, was born during their first year in Illinois. To supplement their income, Grout took a job sweeping up popcorn at a local theater to provide money for groceries and other needs.

Once seminary had been completed, Grout headed to Custer, Mich., to become pastor of the Sugar Ridge congregation — the first full-time pastor the church had had in years. Grout said he still loved teaching, but the call to be a pastor "felt very natural, very right."

The Grouts spent six years, from 1975-81, at Sugar Ridge, and during that stay added another daughter, Sarah, to the family. Meanwhile, Grout continued conversations with two other families who had been part of a "house church" with his family while at Bethany — Brethren pastors Dick Shreckhise in Pennsylvania and Dennis Coffman in West Virginia.

The three had envisioned someday starting a Church of the Brethren on the frontier, "someplace where Brethren had not yet been," Grout said. "We wanted to live out the New Testament and be away from cultural Brethrenism, where you have to 'do it this way or you're not really Brethren.'"

Both Shreckhise and Coffman eventually moved to pastorates in the Southern Pennsylvania District, and so they began to work through that district to carry out their vision. With the help of the General Board's Merle Crouse and the district, the vision became reality.

In spring of 1981, the three families traveled to New England and settled in the southeastern corner of Vermont, near Brattleboro. Grout said they found lifestyle concerns that matched up well with their New Testament vision, such as a strong emphasis on social justice and simple living, but in a very secular setting. The three families met up in Vermont in August of that year and lived in a tent for a week while they searched for housing, which came in the form of a large old farmhouse needing renovation. They converted it into three apartments, and the Genesis project began.

The fellowship met in a school for the first few years until a house in the town of Putney became available. After much prayer and discussion, they purchased the house and began to worship there, using a large room for a sanctuary and others for Sunday school and hospitality.

The three pastors, meanwhile, split one full-time salary and worked part-time to supply the rest and to reach out into the community. They picked apples together at first until Grout found work doing substitute teaching and then part-time teaching in art. Coffman and Shreckhise eventually left for

(continued on p. 16)

Jim Tomlinson

Jim Tomlinson

Jeff Leard

At National Youth Conference 1998, *Paul Grout worked in meaningful silence to assemble his sculpture of Jesus on the cross. After the cross was raised, he addressed the audience of thousands.*

Bethany Seminary hosts Stations of the Resurrection

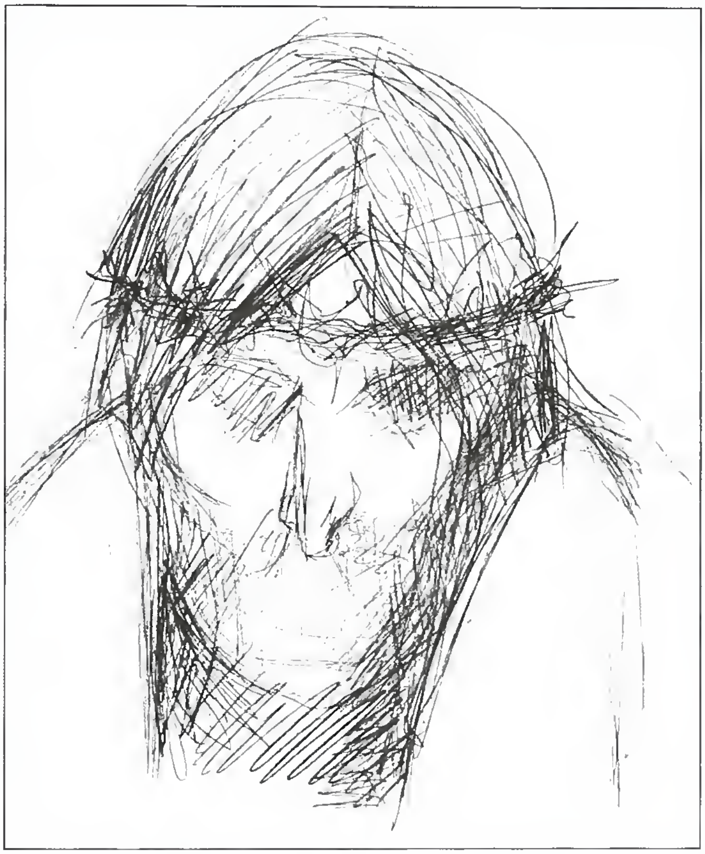
The opportunity for worship and reflection at Bethany Theological Seminary, Richmond, Ind., was enriched this winter by the Stations of the Resurrection art display by Paul Grout, Church of the Brethren artist and pastor of Putney, Vt.

Paul met with faculty, staff, and students from Bethany and affiliated seminary Earlham School of Religion for a meal and program that featured viewing his new video interpretation of the display.

Bethany Theological Seminary's Katonah Fund for Faith and the Arts sponsored the display. The family of Stephen I. Katonah established the fund as a memorial to his life. It seeks to provide opportunities to reveal spiritual truths of justice and faith in contemporary life as depicted through various mediums of art.

The display opened Ash Wednesday evening with a reception. Attendees included youth and advisors from the New Carlisle (Ohio) Church of the Brethren, who enjoyed the opportunity for an "up close and personal" visit with Grout, a speaker at last year's National Youth Conference.

The display was housed in Bethany's Nicarry Chapel, with viewing hours for the public each weekend until Easter. About 200 people signed the guest register, including Bethany, Earlham School of Religion and Earlham College students, faculty, and staff, Richmond community residents, and others from a dozen states.


A study drawing for "The Scourging."

Alvin Zunkel of Elkhart, Ind., traveled to Richmond twice to see the display, which he described as "magnificent." Paula Ulrich, a member of the Katonah Fund Committee, called the display "stunning."

"Every time I look, I see more," she said. The Stations of the Resurrection video was shown repeatedly on local cable television.

Kelly Burk, a 1999 graduate, says Grout's work is "truly a gift." The Bethany community is grateful for the opportunity to share the blessing of both the works and the artist. —Marcia Shetler

(continued from p. 14)

other ministries, and Grout remained as the congregation's full-time pastor.

The art remained a significant part of Grout's life, however, and began to work its way into his ministry when he was asked to lead early morning devotions at National Youth Conference in 1986.

Grout spent that summer gathering limbs during hikes on Putney Mountain and carved them into rough pieces, finally assembling them into a large crucifix, "symbolic of my crucifying Jesus," Grout said, building on Peter's sermon in Acts 2 when the apostle tells the people, "this Jesus whom YOU crucified," extending to all of us.

"Why (Jesus) needs to die is because of who we are," Grout said. "Only in that understanding can we truly come to Christ."

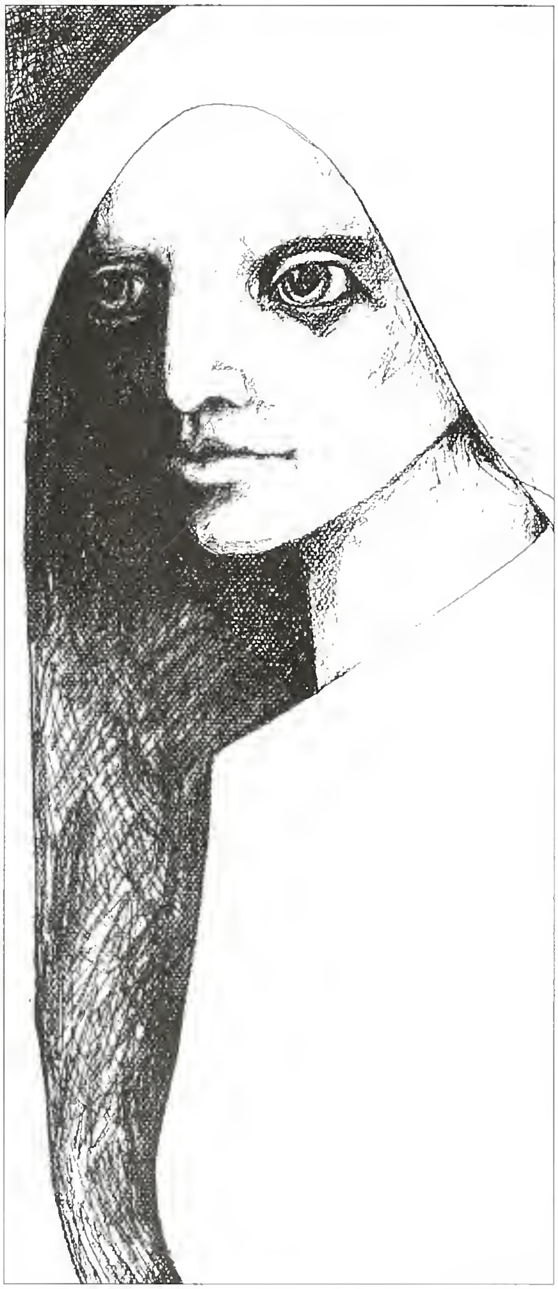
He took that crucifix with him to NYC and to other frequent speaking engagements throughout the denomination. He used a new, even larger crucifix as part of a worship service at last summer's National Youth Conference in Fort Collins, Colo. The worship Grout led was a time that many of the youth in attendance called among the most moving experiences of the week.

Grout began another major religious art project in the 1990s when he became inspired by the Roman Catholics' Stations of the Cross. He decided to do something similar, and some advice from his father shaped the project.

"He said you have a great theology of the cross," Grout said, "but you need to develop a theology of the resurrection. I took that to heart. My father had always been very special to me.

"As I read and studied, I found that the crucifixion was never mentioned apart from the resurrection and ascension.

(continued on p. 18)



A study drawing for "Mary, Mother of Jesus."

Brethrening

A mother's witness

Geneva Kinzie, of Tonasket, Wash., died March 4 after a long life of service to God and to the Church of the Brethren. She was buried next to the grave of her husband in a wooden casket made by her three sons, Steve, David, and Tom. Tom Kinzie, who lives in Portland, Ore., shared this anecdote about her life:

After World War II, my father finished his service at the Marine Hospital in Seattle and the whole family followed him there. My brother Dave and another young boy started the third grade together as new kids in the class. They were Kinzie and Kinjie, and because their names were so close they became best friends. Kinjie and his family had just returned from the internment camps.

One day, Dave and Mom went to the neighborhood grocery store. A new owner had posted a sign, "No Japs!" Dave asked Mom who were the Japs and Mom replied that Kinjie and his family were Japanese. Dave said, "But that means Kinjie can't shop here." And my mother replied, "And neither can we."

MESSENGER would like to publish other short, colorful, humorous or poignant stories of real-life incidents involving Brethren. Please send your submission to MESSENGER, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120-1694 or e-mail to the editor at ffarrar_gb@brethren.org.

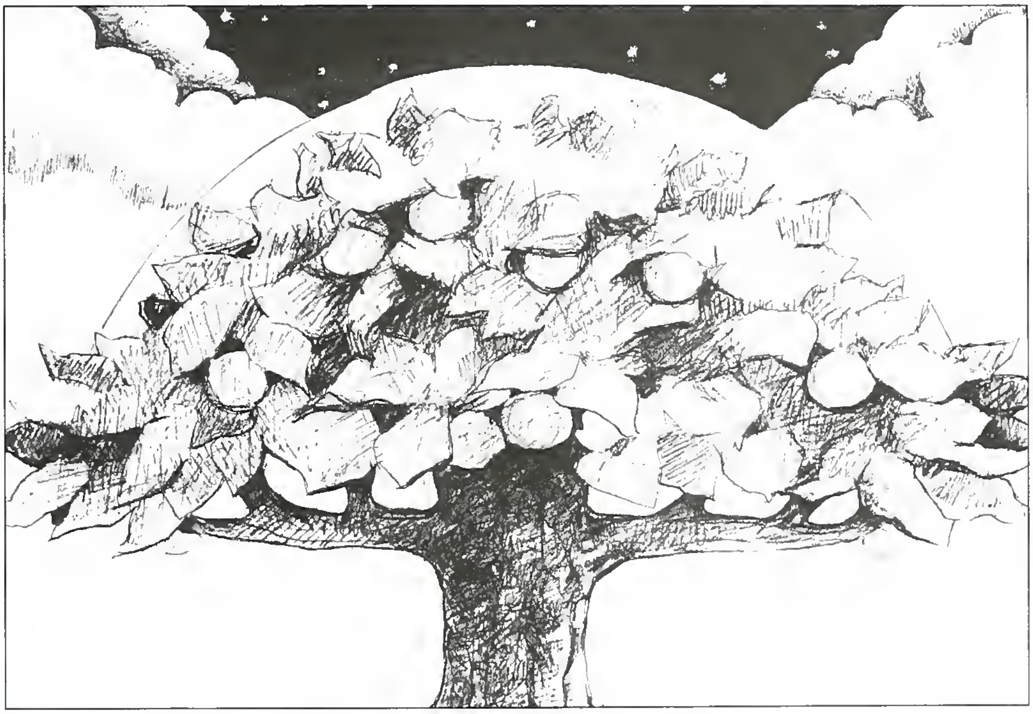
Stations of the Resurrection, the video

Paul Grout's recent video, *Stations of the Resurrection*, is a work of art in itself. A 50-minute program of Grout's art images, narrated by his own mellifluous voice with scripture readings by Susan Greenhart, and accompanied by sacred music ranging from Gregorian chant to African folk hymns, the program provides viewers with an uncommon spiritual experience. The video was taped and edited by David Sollenberger of Annville, Pa.

The script offers "a deeper understanding of the fullness of God's revelation in Jesus Christ" by explaining the theology of resurrection that Grout has reflected in his paintings and drawings. When Jesus "sets his face toward Jerusalem," he is focused "not only on his crucifixion but also on his ascension."

The journey of Jesus was "not a journey that led ultimately toward death, but toward life."

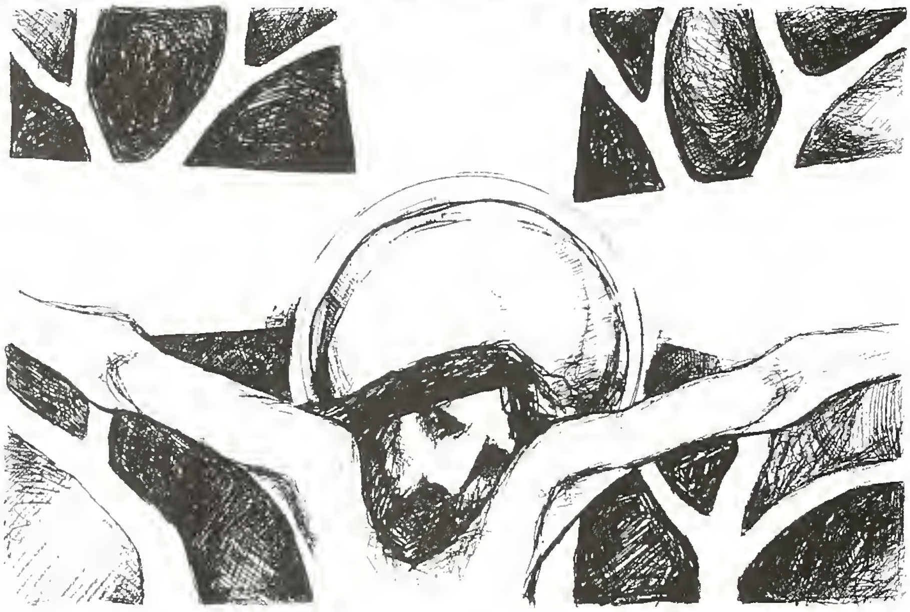
There are reflections here of the artist's impatience with the status quo. When Peter, James, and John are depicted falling asleep while Jesus prays, "they seem symbols of the wider church." And when an angry Jesus drives money-changers out of the temple, the narrator asks, "What makes Jesus angry?" and answers, "self-seeking systems and self-justifying religion."



A study drawing for "The Tree of Life."

But the signature image is that of the tree of life. From Mary's womb comes the fruit that will be hung back on the tree, the cross, to reverse the action of Eve in the garden. This is the tree of life, "and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations" (Rev. 22:2).

Stations of the Resurrection, the video, offers a beautiful opportunity for worship and meditation. It is available for $19.95 from Brethren Press or from Genesis Church of the Brethren, Box 307, Putney, VT, 05346 (Tel. 802-387-4517).—Fletcher Farrar



A study drawing for "The Crucifixion."

(continued from p. 16)

Jesus wasn't heading toward death. He was heading toward life."

Thus Grout called his series of images the Stations of the Resurrection [see MESSENGER, April 1996]. He began with 12 three-dimensional pieces portraying scenes from Jesus' last week, and gradually added more as people offered suggestions. There are now 19, ending with The Body of Christ to show Christ alive and present in today's world through the church.

"They are all pieces of the picture. You had to see the pieces as a whole to understand the message," Grout said. "So many things came alive through that. The whole church participated."

Just recently, Grout wanted to find a way to share this message with the wider church and worked with David Sollenberger, a Brethren video producer in Annville, Pa., to create a video of the pieces. The video, available through Brethren Press or the Genesis church, uses the 19 images along with music and narration to convey the Holy Week message—again calling people back to following Jesus' New Testament example [see p. 17].

"My role throughout ministry, I've felt, is not as an evangelist to the fallen world but as an evangelist to the fallen church," Grout said. "My role seems to have been the evangelization of the church," calling it out of cultural conformity and back to Jesus Christ and the heart of Christianity at its New Testament roots.

That spirit has caught on at Genesis church. In 1990, the congregation began to outgrow its space and decided to build a new sanctuary attached to the original house. It has grown from its original cluster to a membership of about 65 and average attendance of 70 to 80.

More recently, Grout said, the congregation has also sought to re-energize its spiritual life, breaking out of its comfort zone and regaining touch with its original mission and Grout's steady motto: "Take God more seriously; take yourself less seriously."

"Only recently some of us looked at ourselves and wondered if we hadn't started to become the church we dreaded," Grout said. "As things began to work for us, we got comfortable. We've started to call ourselves back."

Members of the congregation have provided the impetus for new evangelistic programs such as new worship committees, an early-morning men's group, cell groups, and a new peace and justice committee.

A large ad in the local newspaper advertised a recent special service looking at the abundant violence in the world, inviting people to come to Genesis and develop a relationship with the Prince of Peace. An additional grant from an anonymous donor will equip the congregation to address peace concerns. Following Jesus' call remains the underlying focus, though.

"We are pretty strongly involved right now," Grout said. "Everything happening in the world (such as Kosovo and the Colorado school shootings) is spurring us on. Programs are popping up all over the place, a lot of things at once. . . . We realized we weren't reaching people who hadn't had contact with the church. It's a new start, really.

"We've certainly had our struggles and failures, too, but God used everything to draw us closer together. Where it will all go, I don't know."

He does know the direction he wants it to head, however: down the path of New Testament Christianity, following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ.

Walt Wiltschek, associate pastor at the Westminster (Md.) Church of the Brethren, first became acquainted with Paul Grout during a youth workcamp more than a decade ago. Wiltschek writes, "I have always been impressed by the sincerity of his faith and the depth of his spirituality, in addition to his amazing artistic skills. He has a real heart for young people, too."

Dawn breaks *over resting cattle at the peace conference site in Wunlit, Sudan.*

The white bull of peace

Brethren help out at the historic Dinka-Nuer Peace Conference in southern Sudan

BY PHILIP AND LOUISE BALDWIN RIEMAN

It is hard to describe our feelings when we received an e-mail message asking if it would be possible for us to come to the New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC) offices in Nairobi, Kenya, to work during January and February 1999 for a Dinka-Nuer Peace Conference in southern Sudan. When we heard the news we were so excited we felt the impulse to jump up and down like children. The thrill came from our love for the people and an eagerness to see and work with them again, especially on such a peace effort. We were eager to return to the land we came to love when we'd worked there from 1992 to 1996 as General Board field workers.

We knew that the Dinka and Nuer tribes in southern Sudan had been warring for years, compounding the suffering both tribes have experienced from the Sudanese civil war between the north and the south. Thousands of people have died at the cruel hands of each other's tribes. Hundreds of thousands of cattle have been stolen. It has been a rough past between the Dinka and the Nuer. And yet they also recognize that they are truly brothers and sisters.

The peace conference was born at the grass roots with local chiefs who gathered in a June 1998 workshop in Lokichoggio, Kenya. About 35 chiefs and church leaders came together and worked out a Nuer-Dinka Loki Accord, signed and thumb-printed by the participants.

Specific plans for the conference came out of ongoing peace efforts of the New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC). It was a huge undertaking. Help was needed. So, in response to the invitation, we returned to Africa to work with Haruun Ruun, the general secretary of NSCC, and the Church of the Brethren's Merlyn Kettering,

A Dinka peace leader.

Sudanese woman and child.

strategic advisor to NSCC, who helped organize the team to prepare for this conference. Bill Lowrey (Presbyterian Church USA) arrived later to facilitate the pre-conference meetings and the conference itself, though it was the Sudanese who led the sessions.

Most of our work was "foot-washing service" for the actual peacemaking that would happen at the conference between the local leaders of the Nuer and Dinka people. We needed to communicate in a land with no mail system nor telephones and with too few radios between villages. We needed to organize transportation where there is practically no infrastructure and one has to depend on chartered flights for travel. And we had to spend considerable time working on fund-raising for this event. Tukols (huts) had to be built to house the conference participants, and the large meeting hall had to be built with mud, tree trunks, branches, grass, and palm fronds. A well had to be dug and latrines made.

The site was chosen for security reasons — an obscure village not on the maps. It was hoped the site would not be known by the Sudanese government in Khartoum, which was still known to bomb any area in the South. Any item needed during the conference had to be purchased and transported to the area — blankets (as beds), mosquito nets, cooking utensils, bowls, cups, silverware, candles, matches, buckets, and food.

Elderly Nuer leader.

Finally, after more than a month of logistical work done from NSCC offices in Nairobi, Kenya, we went to the conference site in southern Sudan to help with preparations. We spent two weeks working with Sudanese to establish the solar-powered electrical system for sound and lights and computer transcription of the meetings in the large hall, and for radio communications. It was a delight to work among people who didn't try to hide their awe at seeing for the first time a hand drill, a staple gun (we had yards of electrical cord to fasten to rafters), or microphones and speakers. We shared in their laughter as many tried out the miracle of hearing their voices amplified. We found ourselves in awe of the wide differences in our worlds and their gracious and delightful acceptance of us and our strange ways and equipment.

Meanwhile, the international community was becoming directly involved in the pre-conference events, which included confidence-building visits by Dinka chiefs to Nuer territory, and visits by Nuer chiefs to Dinka territory. NSCC and human rights representatives and media from England and the US were present to witness the historic "chiefs exchange." After gathering at the conference site, which was in Dinka territory, the Dinka boarded a chartered plane to fly to Nuer land.

(continued on p.22)

Happy memories of passing the peace

As Church of the Brethren General Board field workers we worked with the New Sudan Council of Churches from December 1992 to May 1996, ending the last six months of that year doing interpretation work in churches and some schools here in the US.

During our time in Sudan we helped to establish a peace department at the council and were appointed as its first staff. As we prepared to return to Sudan this year, memories came back to us of workshops with the Sudanese, focusing on peace from biblical, cultural and multicultural, and visionary perspectives. We worked at a grass-roots level, and with a long-term vision for ways of keeping and monitoring peace once it was made.

We had met with pastors, with women's groups, with young adults, with community leaders such as chiefs and elders, as well as with church leaders (bishops) and others to work together on how peace could be made in Sudan in light of our Christian beliefs.

We remember the time in Yomciir in 1996 when we were with some Dinka pastors and women church leaders sharing Jesus' teachings about peace and love. A couple of pastors spoke out that they remembered when Phil had been with them earlier on a peace workshop and had encouraged them to love their enemies and to make peace with them. The Mandari, the Murle, and the Nuer were considered enemies. "Now," they said, "look, here is a Mandari man with us in this workshop today. And we are preparing to talk with the Murle and steps are beginning with the Nuer." They were taking Jesus' teachings seriously and making them a part of their lives even in difficult circumstances.

Two young boys *headed for the Wunlit peace conference site.*

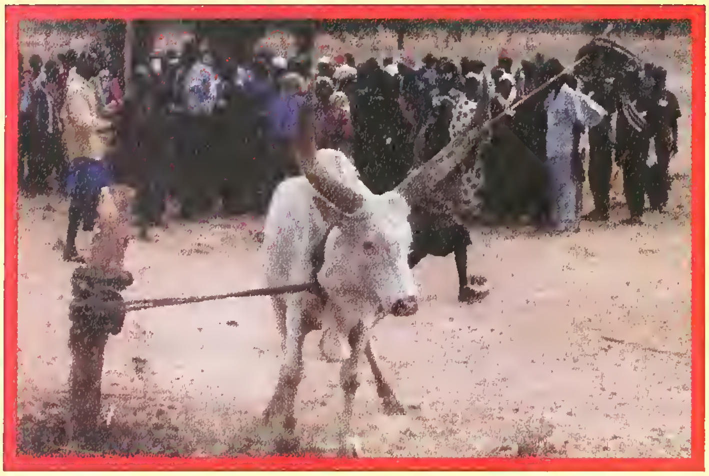
At the peace conference, *a joyous reunification of women from northern Sudan and southern Sudan*

At that same seminar, when Louie shared in discussions about peace with the women, lifting up the teachings of Jesus and other biblical understandings about justice and peace, one woman asked outright, "Does this mean we should not fight?"

Louie realized she came from a life-long understanding of Christian pacifism and these women from a fight for liberation in their land. But she believed the answer was to be found within them. She said, "If we are Christian, we are committed to love and follow Christ. We learn his ways and try to live them." The woman moved Louie profoundly as she responded, "I think we should not fight."

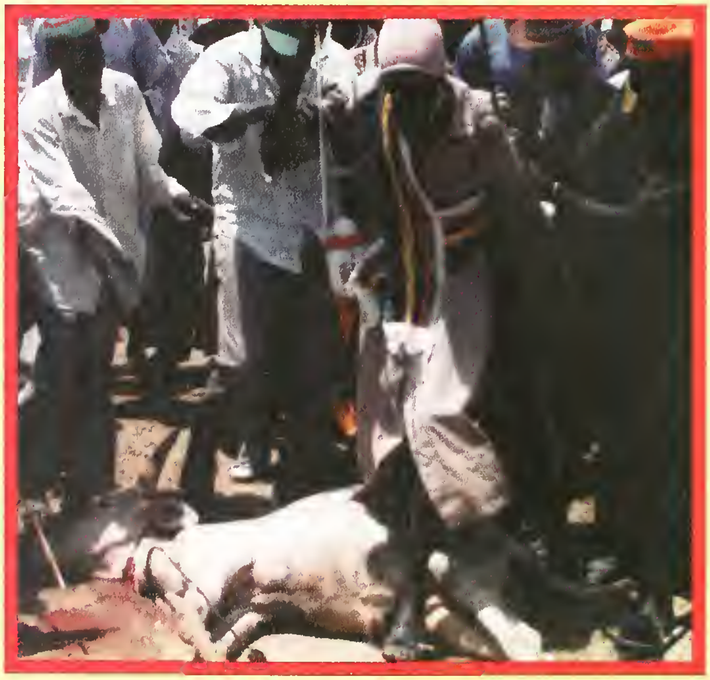
We remember the stories we'd hear at the workshops, of forgiveness, of efforts to be reconciled.

We remember the time we were invited to go to Ayod in 1995 just to meet with a few pastors to plan a peace workshop for a later date. When we got there, instead of a few people, there were about 175 chiefs and elders, women church leaders, and others who came to be involved in planning to work for peace. We heard the people tell about returning enemy prisoners to their people and about how enemy Nuer and Dinka were starting to walk safely and freely in each other's areas and how, in fact, there were people there who had both Dinka and Nuer parents. The conclusion was, "We are each other's children."—Louie and Phil Rieman



White bull *about to be slaughtered on the opening day of the Wunlit peace conference.*

The bull *being slaughtered, Feb. 28, 1999.*



A Nuer chief *steps over the slaughtered bull, a ceremonial sign of endorsing peace.*

(continued from p. 20)

They were royally welcomed by being lifted onto the shoulders of women and carried from the airstrip to the church where their feet were washed in cool, refreshing water.

Then the Nuer chiefs visited Dinka territory. After the pre-conference visit, the Nuer chiefs were able to assure their own people that they would indeed be safe at the peace conference, which would be held in "enemy" territory.

When the Nuer chiefs arrived at the conference site, where they were once again in Dinka land, they were welcomed with the slaughter of a small white bull, a symbol for peace. Each one stepped over the bull in honor of the welcome, good will, and desire for reconciliation. To walk over such a sacrifice is a privilege, and the guests did it with a mixture of solemnity and joy. They seemed to be deeply honored to enter this formerly "enemy" area with such dignity.

Some of the chiefs were carried for a part of the long distance from the airstrip to the peace conference site. The older ones rode in an ancient truck. Chanting, shouting, and singing welcomed the visitors to the area.

By the first day of the conference, representatives from church and peace organizations in Kenya, Germany, Denmark, and Sweden had joined the other observers. The churches represented at the conference, were Anglican/Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Africa Inland, Catholic, Sudan Interior, the Church of the Brethren, and Church Aid from Denmark, England, and Germany.

The international community was not directly involved in the peacemaking efforts, but it was made clear to us that we played an important role. Our presence and financial support conveyed our caring for the Sudanese and what is happening in their land. The Sudanese expressed deep appreciation for our witnessing their efforts for peace. They told each other that they had better be very serious about keeping the peace agreements, because the world would be watching them. The international and ecumenical presence provided a sense of a wider community, and deepened the hope for greater concern and involvement in the struggles and accomplishments of the people in southern Sudan.

The opening ceremony of the traditional spiritual leaders, spear masters, elders, women, youth, and chiefs was interesting to watch. There were parades of chiefs and other leaders making their way to the circle around the big, stately, white peace bull tied to a large stake in front of the meeting hall. There was dancing, singing, mock fighting, and finally the slaughter of the bull.

But it was the passion and determination for peace which really excited us. The air was electric with anticipation. The people, fervent with good will, were ready for resolutions. Speeches were full of the power of their desire for unity and peace. In fact, some of the speakers said the peace had already been made. Now they just had to be sure to keep it.

Normally, the killing of the bull would have come at the end of the peace meeting to seal a successful covenant.

Nuer chief's *canes outside of peace conference meeting hall.*

But the fervor for peace was so strong, the fevered passion for the long-awaited reconciliation was so intense, that the bull was killed before we'd even met inside the meeting hall for the formal opening speeches.

But the grievances still had to be aired, the stories told. For two days the Dinkas spoke, then for two days the Nuers spoke. Some expressed sorrow, some anger. One woman who spoke declared she and other women would no longer give birth to babies who would be sent out to die. The speakers proclaimed the necessity to end the violence, to put the past behind them, and turn a new page. As men and women spoke, representing their tribes, they would often call up their counterpart from the other tribe, and they would embrace and raise their joined hands in a sign of reconciliation and unity. It was a stirring and awesome sight. We wished more Brethren could have joined us as observers, though the denomination's presence was felt.

As we each introduced ourselves in the opening speeches of the conference, we gave greetings from our denomination and told of the early involvement of the Church of the Brethren in Sudan, our participation in NSCC, and our ongoing prayers and support. We felt the collective presence of the church in that place, and we trust the Sudanese people felt it too.

We have a copy of the peace covenant signed in Dinkaland. It is a sign that the Dinka and Nuer people of the Nile's West Bank have reconciled. They have agreed to live peacefully as neighbors and as members of one family.

Now we hear about proposals for more peace conferences in the future between other warring tribes and factions. The international community, donors, partners of the New Sudan Council of Churches, including the Church of the Brethren, join the Sudanese in their interest in this pursuit of peace.

Perhaps the work for peace in southern Sudan is happening like the early missionary work. The seeds are planted and then the Sudanese explode in growth. When the missionaries were expelled by the government from Sudan in 1964, church growth took off with incredible enthusiasm. Now the people are tired of the war, tired of all the killing and violence, dislocation, resulting famine and lack of development. They want peace, and seeds have been planted. Now the people are working hard and enthusiastically for reconciliation and unity. But they need the support of the ecumenical church and the international community. We trust the Church of the Brethren will be an ongoing part of this support and work for peace.

Philip and Louise Baldwin Rieman, of Wabash, Ind., are pastors, former missionaries, and peacemakers. They add these notes of gratitude: "We are so very grateful for the concern and compassion of the Church of the Brethren to be willing to be involved in a country torn by war and local conflicts, and for the support of this effort by Merv Keeney, director for Global Mission Partnerships. We are thankful for the team effort of the Wabash Church of the Brethren, where we pastor, who saw this as part of their mission and sent us as their representatives to be involved with this peace conference. We are also grateful and indebted to Church of the Brethren NSCC consultant Merlyn Kettering and his wife, Una, and son, Kahlil, who so graciously took us into their home while we were working in Nairobi, and to the staff of NSCC for their gracious teamwork."

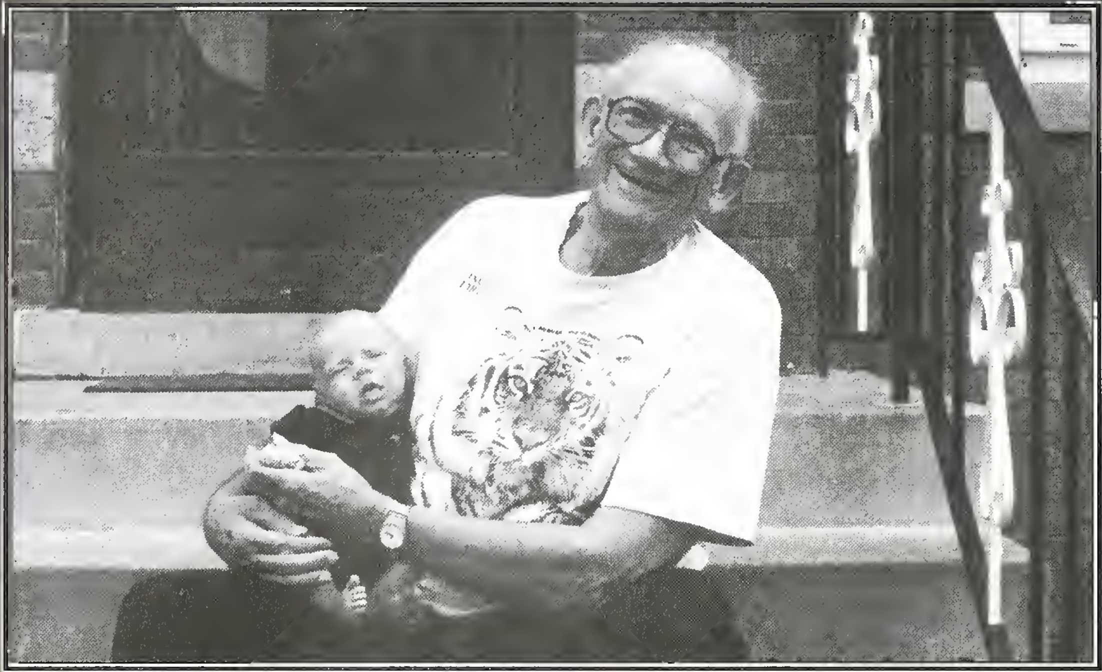
Brethrening

Never too young to participate

Keithan Michael O'Brien is just 15 months old, but he is already a veteran of the children's sermon time at Cherry Lane Church of the Brethren, Clearville, Pa. His parents, Michael and Sonya O'Brien, asked Pastor Kate Spire to implement children's messages soon after Keithan's birth, and he has been a regular at children's messages since he was four months old. On April 11, when, in the absence of the pastor, Congregational Life Team coordinator Jan Kensinger presented the Brethren children's classic *Faith the Cow*, Keithan had a ready response: "Moooooo!"

Messenger *would like to publish other short, colorful, humorous or poignant stories of real-life incidents involving Brethren. Please send your submission to* Messenger, *1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120-1694 or e-mail to the editor at ffarrar_gb@brethren.org.*

Grandparents & grandchildren



Jim Sackett, *father of* MESSENGER *designer Marianne Sackett, enjoying the company of grandson Jackson.*

Marianne Sackett

BY VICTOR STOLTZFUS

New grandparents often tell me that they underestimated the joy and responsibility of their new relationship. It is not only the wonder of holding a baby that carries our genes. It is also the new bond to their children who have suddenly become parents. There is often a special gratitude born of the realization that one time, long ago, a mother and father did all that for them.

Sixty-five years ago my grandparents welcomed me to a home they shared with my parents. I wonder: did they respond to me like I respond to my grandchildren? I remember my grandmother's proverbs and Bible verses, especially the oft-repeated, "Why spend money on that which is not bread"? I remember the time my grandfather made the mistake of turning his back on a billy goat that he had been teasing. He was sore for a week. I remember how my grandparents read books to me until their throats were dry during my childhood illnesses. Today, many children have only one parent. How grateful I am to have had two parents and two grandparents amid the turkeys, chickens, plants, and weeds of our small truck farm.

Today three-generation households are mostly limited to Amish communities. We have higher divorce rates and often many miles between grandparents and grandchildren. However, the role of the grandparents survives and often thrives in the modern world. Our role is secondary but still significant. We can find ways to be supportive without interfering.

What do grandparents do for grandchildren? This past summer five grandchildren and one or more parents were in our home, some for three weeks, others for eight weeks. Our time together was delightful! Grandparents can take a young child from boredom to intense pleasure in minutes. The key is sustained, undivided adult attention to an activity that engages their imagination.

Young children are delighted by a strong push on a 30-foot tire swing, picking cherry tomatoes, or visiting a farm and seeing new kittens. It is surprising how much delight children find in working with an adult who instructs and praises for a job well done. It takes more time, but a small child can drop tulip bulbs into the hole. They can turn grandma's food grinder and squeeze out apple sauce. At times the delight comes when we step aside and watch them carry out a project such as building a hospital for sick animals. Some adults would look with a jaundiced eye and call the whole effort a mess. For the child, it is a beautiful, tangible expression of their care for birds, squirrels, or any sick or injured animals.

Experiences of human delight lay the groundwork for relating to the God of the Bible. "The Lord delights n those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love" (Psa. 147:11). Children need experiences of human delight if they are to ever think of a God who is delighted with them. Parents necessarily teach a lot of "ought," "must," and "should" to move children toward adulthood. But these necessary disciplines take on a different color and texture if we believe the awesome God who commands is also the One who delights in us and invites us to delight in Him.

It isn't easy to grow up. Little ones are often fearful. Grandparents can reassure that the dark is friendly space. We tell them that the loud train will not leave the tracks and run over them. It is safe to go to children's time in an unfamiliar church. They can learn to swim. Children need assurance that all will be well the first day of school and that a scratched knee will heal. A broken toy need not be a permanent loss. Grandpa has glue.

Public shaming is a real fear. Competitive children just hate to lose a foot race or a word game. They need reassurance that losing a contest is not a stain for life. And with time, they will learn that no one wins every contest. Someone out there is faster or smarter or both. A frequent message to adults in the Bible is "fear not." Overcoming fear as a child is a necessary step to coping with adolescent and adult fears later on. Grandparents can help a frightened child shrink threats down to a manageable size.

Doubts sometimes haunt children. Walking down the street, completely out of the blue, I was asked by a five-year-old grandchild, "Do you believe in God?" I was tempted to say too much. I restrained myself to saying that yes, I do believe in God. I believe because the Bible teaches about God, because of the wonder of nature and God's love shown by my parents and church people. That was enough. She said very little in response but I hope my few words were reassuring at the time and perhaps food for thought later on.

We live in a world where both children and adults value lots of tangible things. It is no wonder that children sometimes doubt a God who is silent and invisible. Grandparents can provide safe space for the doubts that children might be ashamed to express to parents and other adults.

Grandparents tell the stories that root children in family history. I am repeatedly asked for stories about when I was a little boy. Children must deal with rapid changes at home, at school, and even inside their developing bodies. It is reassuring to know that they are part of a larger, continuing story. In the future, our furniture, our photos, and tombstones will be their link to family history. For now, we have a brief time to make and share memories. So much of the Hebrew and Christian faith consists of words and rituals of remembering. Grandparents who make the past attractive and remembering important encourage a rooted faith.

What do grandchildren do for grandparents? Anyone who has ever taken an unhurried walk with a curious child will see the world in a new way. Trees have leaves, climbing limbs, and bark with texture. Granddaddy long legs insects can climb up glass, morning dew sparkles, and bossy jays chase other birds away from the feeder. Nature is wondrous to a child. Grandchildren share their gift of wonder with us. The pace of a child's walk slows us down so that we observe things we would ordinarily miss.

"Grandma (or Grandpa), I love you." The affection of a grandchild is different from the routine good wishes we receive from other adults. It comes with sparkling eyes and a lilt in the voice. It is often spontaneous, expressed in a time and place where we did not expect it. Some of the most formal, even formidable adults I have ever met, go into emotional meltdown when a grandchild says, "I love you."

Grandchildren, even at a tender age, mirror back bits of ourselves. I wish it were only the most admirable aspects of our lives but alas, the mirror is honest. We don't do a lot of psychological or physical changing in the later decades of our lives. Grandchildren make a hopeful new beginning. Working with and alongside parents, we may be able to interpret the inherited strengths and weaknesses of our grandchildren in a helpful manner.

Grandchildren strengthen our connections to the larger web of life. We meet their friends at a birthday party and we are invited to grandparents day at school. When grandchildren are in tow we have a reason to engage in brief conversations with other grandparents who are strangers in a grocery store. Some grandparents travel 1,000 miles or more for the service of infant dedication.

But most important of all, we relate in new and creative ways to their parents. Today's two-career parents, also involved in church and civic life, are very busy people. Grandparents can clean, shop, and provide emotional support when a child is born. We can also provide time for a parents' night out or even a vacation when parental batteries run low.

Folks in the adult world are especially quick to ask us retired people if we are busy. Grandchildren connect us to guilt-free leisure. Grandchildren connect us to our deeper, reflective selves.

Grandparents, parents, and grandchildren have much to offer each other. Even when grandparents joke about enjoying the taillights as much as the headlights of their children's cars, they know and feel a deeper truth. We may get tired at night when the house is filled with little people but it is one of the most rewarding forms of fatigue we will ever know.

Victor Stoltzfus, of Goshen, Ind., is the retired president of Goshen College and is now active in writing, speaking, and consulting. He engages in grandparenting in Tucson and Baltimore "when our children need backup help or a new one is born." He says he remembers fondly his Church of the Brethren neighbors at Martinsburg, Pa., his boyhood home.

Youth: Involve us

Survey yields hopeful results

Frank Klein

Mountaintop experience: *Youth at NYC expressed their enthusiasm for being part of the church.*

BY WALT WILTSCHEK

Have you ever wondered what the youth in your church are thinking — really thinking?

Have you wondered how they felt about the church? Have you been curious about what they believe? Have you wanted to know what they liked about worship, or how that worship affects their lives outside of church?

Well, it's time to listen. The youth have spoken.

A survey of more than 30 questions was distributed at last summer's National Youth Conference, and more than 2,300 senior high youth responded. After months of painstaking work to input and tabulate the information gleaned, a snapshot of Church of the Brethren youth has emerged.

"A number of different surveys and research materials had been done about youth, and I thought it would be nice to have input from Brethren youth, see how they compare and contrast with others," said Dave Witkovsky, pastor of nurture at the Roaring Spring (Pa.) Church of the Brethren and a family counselor.

Using some questions from other surveys plus some original ones compiled by talking to people at Annual Conference and elsewhere, Witkovsky put together an initial list of questions. Joe Hinish, an industrial psychologist and the small groups coordinator at NYC, revised the survey to increase its reliability, and others looked it over to make critiques and add finishing touches.

Then the youth took their turn, answering questions about personal opinions and beliefs, feelings about the church and Brethren practices, family, and personal actions.

While most of the results followed the trends that emerged in other surveys, Witkovsky said, the answers should cause Brethren congregations to take a good look at their youth ministries.

Chris Douglas, the denomination's coordinator of youth/young adult ministry, has indeed found much to think about since seeing the results. A few of the responses particularly grabbed her attention.

For example, youth said that if they could be guaranteed church leaders would listen to them, the one thing they'd most like to ask is to find ways to get teenagers more involved in the life of the church.

"I found that fascinating," Douglas said, "because I think there's a perception out there by many adults that youth aren't all that interested in church.

"The second highest response to the question was 'Give teenagers more responsibility to help make decisions in the church.' When you put those two together, you get over 800 youth who responded that they want to be more involved in the life of the church. That feels to me to be a very significant response."

Other things that stuck out for Douglas: Youth listed prayer time as the most meaningful part of worship to them, followed by praise songs and singing hymns; and an overwhelming majority of youth said that nobody in their congregations had ever approached them about going into the pastoral ministry or other church vocations.

Most had fairly clear views and opinions about God and Jesus but were widely divided on the Holy Spirit. Almost all said their religious beliefs affect the way they acted at school and with friends at least some of the time.

Fewer than 5 percent feel feetwashing is an outdated practice, although more than half wanted to see flexibility in the style of the love feast. Most youth felt well-educated about love feast, communion, and baptism, but far fewer felt that way about Brethren history.

About two-thirds said faith had become more important to them in the past year. More than a third, however, said they never hear their father or other primary adult male talk about his faith, and about 20 percent said they didn't hear their mother talk about her faith.

"I hope local congregations will really look at what young people are saying and shape their ministry accordingly," said Douglas, who also plans to use the results to shape denominational programming like future NYCs, National Youth Sunday materials, and training opportunities.

"Every time I talk with youth advisors, I'm going to be talking with them about this response of young people — get teens more involved, give them more responsibility. This is an important cry for us to hear."

Walt Wiltschek is associate pastor for youth and Christian education at the Westminster (Md.) Church of the Brethren and a member of the denomination's Junior High Ministry Task Force.

Letters

Gingrich legacy survives in unfunded mandates

Congratulations on your April editorial, "Squelch the squelchers," about the item of business regarding "unfunded mandates." To borrow a Quaker phrase, "It spoke to my condition."

I have been wondering who came up with the "unfunded mandates" proposal ever since I heard of it. "Unfunded mandates" is, after all, one of the phrases Newt Gingrich put in his "Contract with America," and cutting social spending was high on his list of priorities. Could the "culture wars" of the religious right have carried over into a battle for the Church of the Brethren? Some folks have been complaining about a so-called "liberal bias" at Elgin for years; have the same folks been so quick to adopt their own conservative bias in its place?

Bill Bowser
Martinsburg, Pa.

Casting stones

Thanks for a great April editorial on the unfunded mandates proposal! Now I'm waiting to hear from some "separation of powers" purist who will decry an employee trying to tell Annual Conference what to do.

You raise a complicated and complex issue and make some helpful observations. Another side of the coin is how Annual Conference can "un-fund" some longstanding programs that have outlived their usefulness — "long-funded sacred cows." There has to be a better way than a restructure process! There's also the problem of doing only those things that win in a popularity contest for dollars — which is no way to run a family or denominational budget.

You make a good point! At the same time, we'd better pray for our faithful General Board members who have to make tough budget decisions after listening to you and competing voices while trying to discern God's will in the cacaphony. If it's a matter of choosing between the board and a Program Feasibility Committee as the decision-maker, my inclinations are in favor of the General Board (or OEPA or ABC, as the case may be); it's part of their original charter as administrative "arms" of Annual Conference and they each represent a broader base of interests and experiences than is likely to characterize a "watchdog" PFC.

Maybe some new language needs to be inserted in the GB, OEPA, and ABC bylaws that gives them until the next Annual Conference to respond to "mandates" with affirmative action or a "show cause" report of inaction.

Norman L. Harsh,
Roanoke, Va.

She is a tender God

I don't usually get upset reading too many articles in Messenger, but April's article by Harold Martin titled, "God is a tender God," deeply frustrated me. After reading the beginning paragraphs which readily and appropriately acknowledged that "It is impossible for any of us to totally comprehend the nature of God," and that "the being and attributes of God have always been a profound study," and that "when we study the nature of God we must be careful not to dwell upon one attribute to the neglect of another," I was at first refreshed. "What a nice admittance that we as humans are so limited by our earthly concepts and language to be able to fully describe and know God," I thought. "What a nice caution to us."

Yet to read in the section "the mother who comforts," references to God like and as Mother, followed by continuous immediate references to God as "He" and "himself" only seemed nonsensical and as a lack of follow-through on the first comments. How frustrating! Poor God, in a neat little box again.

It seemed awkward and even ridiculous to hear Harold Martin begin that section talking about how God is as a mother comforting her child and then refer to God, in that section, with the pronoun "He" over and over. If we acknowledge God's expansiveness beyond ourselves as well as God's knowability, and if we acknowledge that God is, of course, in fact not literally a man or a woman, then why, in God's name, is it so hard for us to utilize "She" and "Herself," as well as "He" and "Himself?" Particularly when talking of God in reference to female attributes!

Barbara Brown Taylor's book, *When God Is Silent*, contains a wonderful first section discussing the limits, frustrations, and even lack of integrity where our language is concerned. At one point, Taylor takes time to talk about how God was not to be named because to name God was to indeed limit God and seemed in fact blasphemous. At this point in my life, and after reading articles such as that one, lovely at points, and yet floundering with our language, I am about ready to go back to this idea of not naming God for the sake of saving God's uniqueness and unlimitedness.

Someday I pray we (myself included, as I wrestle with this as a pastor in the pulpit) can use He or She to refer to God without even thinking about it. Those of us in the pulpits need more support from leaders who step forward and speak about how God is not a human man or a human woman, and how, although we know God, God is also beyond ourselves. And then we need them to switch off their pronouns to follow through.

Erin Matteson
Wheaton, Ill.

March around the world

Thanks for the great March issue. It was, for me, a gift and a blessing. David Radcliff's keen analysis of what causes hunger, along with strong biblical reflection on justice teachings in the Old and New Testaments, make the use of the Global Food Crisis Fund a clear response to the Gospel as I see it.

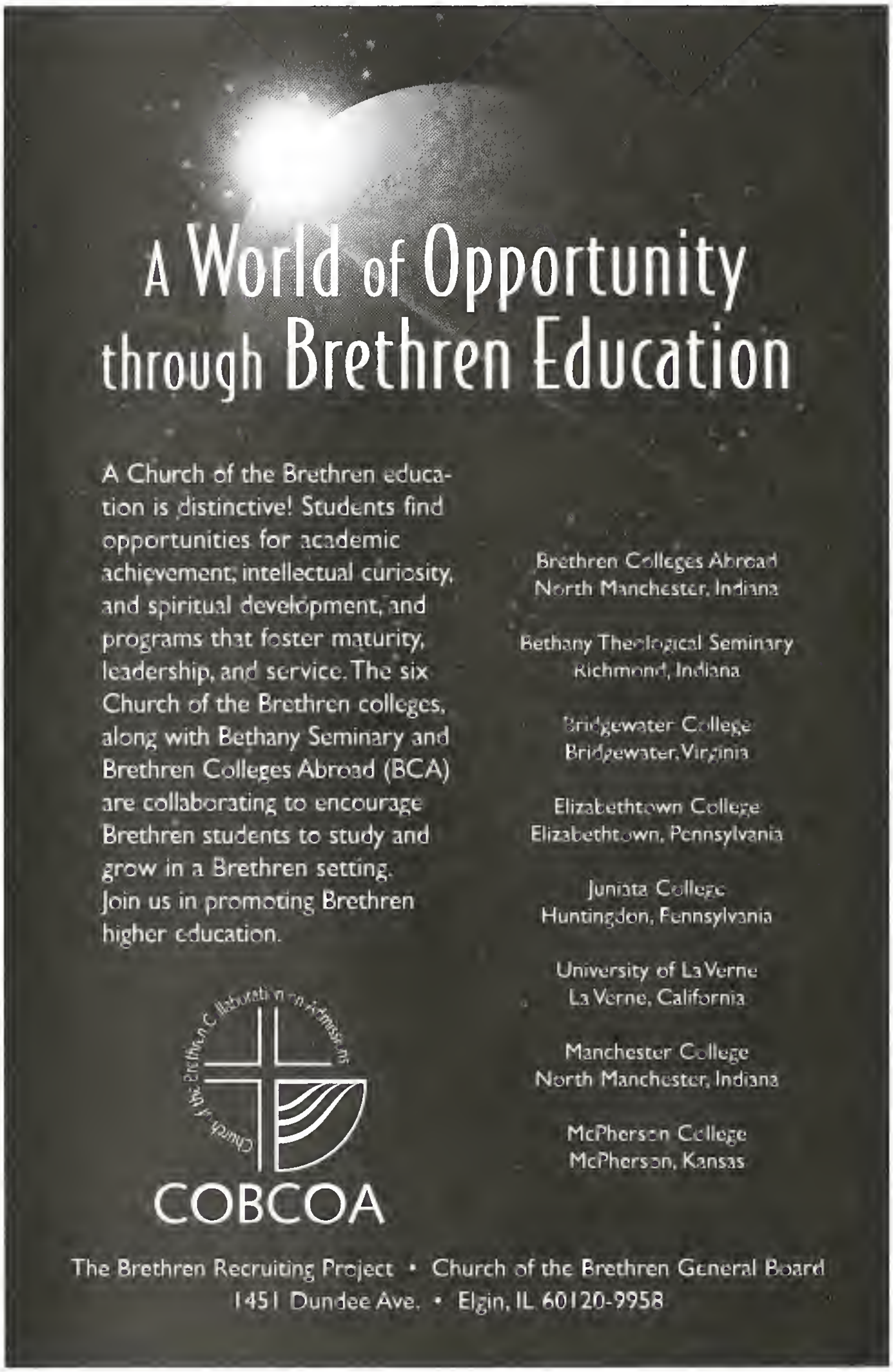
Sue Wagner Fields has helped us to know that not all disasters are acts of nature. They are often rooted in human greed and sinful systems. During this past year, my wife, Doris, and I have witnessed firsthand the evil effects of international debt and environmental degradation on the people of Haiti, especially the rural poor.

We have also seen the fruits of visionary mission schools during a visit to South Africa. But the schools are only one part of what has produced a generation of strong black women who now occupy key roles in the building of the new South Africa.

Fletcher Farrar does well to remind us that mission in the manner of Christ includes both speaking and listening for what God is already doing in the lands to which we go, even before we arrive.

This and much more made the March issue of MESSENGER a beautiful and challenging one. Keep up the good work.

Benton Rhoades
Claremont, Calif.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3609 N. 27th Street
Phoenix, AZ 85016 (602) 955-8537
Sunday Services 10:45 AM

Tucson Church of the Brethren
2200 North Dodge Boulevard
Tucson, AZ 85716 (520) 327-5106
Sunday Services 10:00 AM

The blessings of borders

I am writing to address some concerns I have about your editorial in the March issue, "The last great superpower."

I was raised in the Church of the Brethren and now am a member of the United Methodist Church. My concerns about your recent message involve a general concern I have for the Brethren at large. It seems as though the borders of this nation are only important if they fit into our neat theological package. If not, we are happy to discard them as if they possess no value in God's great plan.

In my life I have come to realize that without the protection of the "artificial" borders of this nation, I would not have the ability to express my opinions freely, worship in my own way, and go to serve humanity anywhere in the world without extreme risk to my life.

In my conversations with my Brethren friends I see a naive vision of the world, one that is made up of people with the same values, laws, and philosophy that we have created for ourselves. Unfortunately there are many evil people in this world who would destroy us. This should be obvious in light of recent events in Littleton, Colo., and Kosovo.

While I do not believe that our policy in Kosovo, i.e., to bomb it until it is no more, is sound peacekeeping policy, I also don't believe that stripping the American military down to nothing will accomplish anything for peace. I believe peace comes in a troubled world by having the US retain its strong military presence. I believe we must love this nation and embrace its profound responsibility to the world as a "superpower" in the spirit of Christ's teachings. We must protect its borders and maintain some healthy self-interests if we are to do any good in any other part of the world where needs are great.

Carol L. Ebener
LaSalle, Ill.

Peace Book goes to school

My attention has been focused on violence, especially in schools. The Brethren theme, "Another way of living. Peacefuly. Simply. Together," also speaks against violence. The recent beautiful little booklet, from the Brethren Witness office, *The Peace Book*, is a great way to present to others the idea of peace.

The Michigan District Witness Commission is presenting a challenge and an opportunity to churches. We are giving to each church a small number of books and asking them, when school begins this fall, to go to nearby middle or high schools and offer *The Peace Book* as a reference for the school library or indicate a book can be ordered for each child.

Wouldn't this be a great opportunity for every Church of the Brethren in the whole nation?

Donald K. Flint
Sterling Heights, Mich.

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POSITIONS AVAILABLE

The Lebanon Valley Brethren Home, a continuing care retirement community located in south-central PA, is seeking a Director of Development. Responsibilities will include planning, organizing and implementing fund raising activities, public relations and marketing. The successful candidate will have a minimum of two years experience in fund raising, effective communication skills, both oral and written, and an understanding of and appreciation for the Church of the Brethren faith. We are an equal opportunity Employer. Mail or fax resumé, with cover letter, to: Director of Human Resources, Lebanon Valley Brethren Home, 1200 Grubb Street, Palmyra, PA 17078, Ph: (717)838-5406, Fax (717)838-3826.

Mennonite Indemnity, Inc., a church-based company promoting mutual aid through property and casualty insurance, seeks to fill two new leadership positions. Director of Information Systems-bachelor's degree or equivalent experience in information systems and five years in systems analysis, design and management. Leadership, planning, relational and communication skills needed. Director of Insurance-bachelor's degree in a business-related field. Three-five years of experience in the P& C industry; familiar with insurance filings and products. Strong leadership, analytical, relational and communication skills needed. CPCU or other insurance designation preferred. Please mail or fax resumes with cover letter and salary expectations to: Mennonite Indemnity, Inc., 704 Main St., Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, Fax: (717) 859-3983

TRAVEL

Treasures of Italy. Travel on Nov. 2, 1999 from Washington, D.C. (Dulles Airport) to Rome, then to Sorrento-Capri (via Pompeii), Assisi, Venice (via San Marino), Stressa (via Verona), and Florence (via Genoa and Pisa). Price: $2,198 per person. This 14-day tour includes hotels, breakfasts, 10 dinners, sightseeing, airport transfers, and services of a professional tour director. Deposit $300 and/or request brochure from: Wayne F. Geisert, President Emeritus, Bridgewater College, Box 40, Bridgewater, VA 22812. Phone: 540-433-1433 or 828-5494.

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"The view from the editor's pew"

Speaker: Fletcher Farrar, editor of Messenger
Music by folksinger Peg Lehman

July 1, 1999
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Get acquainted with Fletcher Farrar, the new editor of Messenger, as he describes the excitement he felt on discovering the Church of the Brethren, and his observations on the church after a year on the staff.

Singer Peg Lehman has been delighting audiences for years with her songs that tell stories, celebrate life, honor family ties, respect the earth, nurture tolerance, and promote peace and justice. Her music will touch the hearts of Messenger Dinner guests.

For dinner tickets, call the Annual Conference office at 800-323-8039 or order from advance packet order form. Tickets also available in Milwaukee at Annual Conference ticket sales.

The National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA is accepting applications for the position of general secretary. The general secretary is the principal executive officer of the Council, responsible to the General Assembly and Executive Board for: providing dynamic leadership, articulating the mission and purpose of the Council, providing spiritual guidance and vision, symbolizing the vocation of Christian unity in service and witness, maintaining relationships with communions, and implementing and interpreting policy.

An applicant must be a member in good standing in a communion that is a member of the Council, be theologically competent and articulate, and be an active participant in church life and in the ecumenical movement. Minimum educational requirement: graduate theological degree or equivalent experience. The Council is seeking a leader with a collaborative leadership style and excellent communication skills.

For a copy of the position description and application form please contact:

General Secretary Search Committee
National Council of Churches
475 Riverside Drive, Room 650
New York, NY 10115-0050

Applications will be accepted with a postmark no later than August 2, 1999.

Turning Points

New members

Antelope Park, Lincoln, Neb.: Sam Berndt, Erin Dempsey, Ian Knopp, William Pegans IV, Neil Rutledge, Joshua Ward Moore, Lindsey Ward Moore
Bear Creek, Dayton, Ohio: Jennifer Gillum, William Schwabe, Kim Schwabe
Big Creek, Cushing, Okla.: Curtis Meloy, Elaine Ryan, Ray Ryan, Christa Todd, Darren Francis, Kimberly Francis, Nathan Meloy
Brookville, Ohio: Matthew Nihiser, Amy Cummings, Joseph Cummings, Danielle Foley, Don and Ruby Sievers, Kay and Leonard McGraw, Henry and LaVerna Bang, Amy Beth Fetters Howard, Amanda Bogan, Mel and Vivian Ballinger, Martha Plunkett, Ben and Sheila Sievers, Thomas and Geraldine Mills, Rebecca J. Dull, Jane Jenkins, Robert and Mary Newman, Robert and Diana Bitner, Jessica Dull, Jeff and Beth Schrodi
Cedar Creek, Garrett, Ind.: Marilyn Joseph, Mallory Knott, Daniel Parrett, John Graft, Kris Graft, Katie Carunchia, Joe Putnam, Jeremy Putnam
Elizabethtown, Pa.: Aaron Good, Derrick Stevens, Heather Haldeman, Patrick Myers, David Day, Elyse Kolonauski, Lindsey Lightner
Enders, Neb.: Clifford and Violet Beard
Eversole, New Lebanon, Ohio: Garry Curliss, Earl Valley
First, McPherson, Kan.: David Fruth, Bonnie Fruth, Amelia Hanley, Rachael Stevens, Elizabeth Wagoner
Hope, Freeport, Mich.: Bethany Padgett, Casey Tuttle
Jacksonville, Fla.: Justin Raymer
Lima Elm Street, Lima, Ohio: Evelyn Gose
Lititz, Pa.: Jack Bingeman, Julia Boyer, Leah Eshelman, Alex Garner, Brandon Geib, Nicole Kreider, Gail Longenecker, Ronald McNeill, Jonathan Shenk, Lindsay Tennis, Michael Tobias, John and Lisa Huber, Robert and Polly Garner, Viola McNeill, Elizabeth Pittenger, Robert and Jean Myers
Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Crystal Bretz, Bradley Eisenhauer, Kevin Shaffer, Randall Wakefield, Ryan Wakefield, Steven and Gayle Amon, Lynne Grew, Glenn Brumbaugh
Memorial, Martinsburg, Pa.: Alison Raftery, Jay Raftery, Charles Greenland, Mary Greenland, James Hall, Michael Forshey
Midland, Va.: Stephen Petio
Myerstown, Pa.: Barney and Rhea Brown, Richard Brown, Bill and Edna Yoh, Marcie Hill, Donna Layser, Travis Brubaker, Brian Smith, Megan Walmer, Katie Diefenbach, Mark Seldomridge, Kervin Wenrich
Nappanee, Ind.: Rod and Jennifer Newcomer, Tony and Natalie Stover, Harold Herr, Jr., Jeremy Herr, Anna Lou Yoder, Donna Hawkins
New Carlisle, Ohio: Abby Brubaker, Andrew Brubaker, Andrew Ferguson, David Gevedon, David Lemmer, Ryan Miller, Amanda Phares, Geoffrey Reno, Lyndsay Reno, Michael Shroyer, Christopher Tooke, Janette and Jerry Atkins, Malissa and Richard Tracy, Michael and Carol Woelfer
North Liberty, Ind.: Andrew King, Emily King
North Webster, Ind.: Maurice Dorsey, Chad McClintic, Dave Wilson, Isletta Reese,
Peace Valley, Mo.: Beth and Kristin Protiva, Angel Shrubb, Ashley Mizell
Ridge, Shippensburg, Pa.: Derek Krall, Keri Krall, Crystal Devinney, Mark and Linda Brandt, Johnathon Brandt, Sharon Brandt, Randy Brandt
Shalom, Durham, N.C.: Michel Spencer
Walker Chapel, Mt. Jackson, Va.: Jeremiah Grogg
Woodbury, Pa.: Randy and Sherry Imler

Wedding Anniversaries

Bates, Donald and Emma Mae, Elkhart, Ind., 55
Eash, Clare and Beryl, Freeport, Mich., 65
Foster, Paul and Janet, Roanoke, Va., 55
Howell, Weldon and Mildred, St. John, Kan., 60
Mason, Frank and Martha, Shelbyville, Mo., 50
Royer, Jerry and Ruth, Virden, Ill., 60
Smith, Arlington and Mary Jane, Lebanon, Pa., 50
Ulbricht, Ernest and Dorothy, North Liberty, Ind., 50

Deaths

Adkins, Delitha, 84, Cushing, Okla., Feb. 8
Albright, Madeline G., 87, Martinsburg, Pa., March 1
Andes, Ray Clifford, 83, Sumerduck, Va.
Blough, Grace, 89, Lancaster, Pa., Feb. 10
Bond, Florence, 90, Lawrence, Kan., Jan. 12, 1997
Bowman, Mary I., 85, Bridgewater, Va., April 13
Bowman, Mary K., 86, Martinsburg, Pa., Feb. 24
Bowser, Charles, 90, Brookville, Ohio, March 26
Burton, D. Conrad, Long Beach, Calif., March 31
Butterbaugh, Mary Ruth, North Manchester, Ind., March 13
Dancy, Fred S., 97, N. Wilkesboro, N.C., Dec. 19
Dannelley, Mary, 78, Elizabethtown, Pa., Feb. 21
Deaven, Margaret, 88, Palmyra, Pa., April 20
Donmoyer, Frances, 88, Palmyra, Pa., April 14
Donmoyer, Mark, 91, Palmyra, Pa., Dec. 15
Farling, Frances I., 79, New Carlisle, Ohio, March 9
Flory, Donald, 79, Overbrook, Kan., Sept. 30, 1997
Flory, Thelma, 78, Lawrence, Kan., Sept. 6
Foltz, Clarence, 80, Annville, Pa., March 20
Fruhwirth, Helen, 89, Frackville, Pa., Dec. 26
Gall, Sharon, 53, Glenford, Ohio, Feb. 26
Gardner, Anna E., 78, Loveland, Colo., Feb. 5
Garner, Rachel H., 87, Westminster, Md., March 9
Gasper, Joe, 87, Greenville, Ohio, Feb. 8
Gingerich, Reva, 84, Garrett, Ind., March
Haddad, Barbara, 65, Elton, Pa., Jan. 24
Harter, John, 67, Hershey, Pa., Dec. 13
Heindel, George W., 81, York, Pa., April 13
Helser, Raymond, Nappanee, Ind., March 28
Herring, Mary, 100, Uniontown, Pa., March 14
Hershey, Carroll, 59, Elizabethtown, Pa., April 19
Hicks, Douglas, 88, Brookville, Ohio, March 30
Hildebrand, Debbie, 42, Abingdon, Md., March 10
Hollinger, Rufus, 80, Palmyra, Pa., March 13, 1998
Horne, Helen E., 89, Longmont, Colo., Dec. 27
Horst, Mervin, Cornwall, Pa., Oct. 29
Hunter, James W., 64, Wakarusa, Ind., April 7
Irby, Lorabelle, 83, Kokomo, Ind., March 16
Keller, Denise Lynn, 43, Martinsburg, Pa., March 13
Kiser, Ralph, 85, North Webster, Ind., June 28, 1998
Krauter, Furman, 80, Palmyra, Pa., Feb. 18, 1998
Laprad, John A., 86, Delphi, Ind., Jan. 31
Laudermilch, Martha, 76, Palmyra, Pa., Dec. 18
Lung, Walter, 88, Garrett, Ind., Feb. 10
MacGee, Virgie, 102, Palmyra, Pa., Feb. 5, 1998
Messick, Ralph W., 86, Warrenton, Va.
Micklus, William, 76, Thayer, Ill., Jan. 29
Miller, M. Jack, 72, Loveland, Colo., Oct. 17
Morse, Kenneth I., 85, North Manchester, Ind., March 23
Mumper, Loreeta I., 82, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, March 26
Myers, Helen, 88, Brookville, Ohio, June 2
Nobles, Carl, North Manchester, Ind., April 8
Nyers, Delmas L., 82, York, Pa., April 13
Orr, Dale, 70, Glenford, Ohio, April 23
Patchen, Tom, 74, Lawrence, Kan., Aug. 10
Patton, Gladys, 83, Kokomo, Ind., March 31
Reeder, John, 90, Palmyra, Pa., Feb. 10
Riley, June, 69, Elizabethtown, Pa., March 8
Roberts, Bernard, 83, Syracuse, Ind., March 4
Rohrer, Cassandra "Cassie," 16, Willow Springs, Mo., April 19
Rutter, Gordon, 85, Lebanon, Pa., Dec. 31
Saul, Ernest, 57, Richland, Pa., Dec. 16
Shoemaker, William, 88, Ashland, Ohio, February
Shores, Jayne, 78, Brookville, Ohio, Jan. 6
Shroyer, Edna, North Manchester, Ind., March 5
Shull, Mildred Morgan, North Manchester, Ind., April 2
Silling, Florence, 69, Staunton, Va., Jan. 25
Smith, Mary R., 83, Shippensburg, Pa., Jan. 22
Spangler, Harold H., 81, York, Pa., April 7
Speicher, Paul, North Manchester, Ind., March 18
Steck, Cleo, 85, Brookvlle, Ohio, Jan. 6
Stoudt, Theodore, 96, Palmyra, Pa., Jan. 22
Strom, Anna Miles, 94, Leonard, Mo., March 7
Stubbs, Everett, 76, West Plains, Mo., April 20
Stukenberg, Ruth, Forreston, Ill., February
Stum, Ruth, 85, Lancaster, Pa., Feb. 21
Stump, Robert C., 79, Goshen, Ind., Dec. 23
Summers, Raymond, 87, Peculiar, Mo., March 11
Tate, Eda, 87, Lawrence, Kan., April 30, 1997
Troxell, Derwood L. "Woody," 67, Akron, Ohio, March 29
Yoder, Marilyn, North Manchester, Ind., April 4
Young, Marjorie, 66, Palmyra, Pa., Aug. 24
Zincke, Mabel Lucille, 88, Ashland, Ohio, March 20

Licensings

Doering, Carol A., Feb. 2, Parker Ford. Pa.
Doering, John N. Jr., Feb. 2, Parker Ford, Pa.
Jones, Jeffrey Brian, Dec. 12, Beaver Creek, Knoxville, Tenn.
Pruitt, Lonnie Lewis, Dec. 12, Peak Creek, Laurel Springs, N.C.
Latshaw, Daniel R., Feb. 2, Parker Ford, Pa.
Rhoades, Marie, Nov. 10, Harrisburg First, Harrisburg, Pa.
Roudebush, Norbert (Pete) L., Jan. 28, Eaton, Ohio
Yeakley, Kevin L., March 2, Long Run, Lehighton, Pa.

Ordinations

Bollinger, Steven Wayne, Jan. 16, Salem, Englewood, Ohio
Kontra, Peter J., March 27, Oakland, Bradford, Ohio
Powell, Lewis E., Jan. 30, Valley Point, Orbisonia, Pa.
Shaw, J. Russel, May 20, Ambler, Pa.
Ullery, Victoria L., March 27, Bear Creek, Dayton, Ohio

Pastoral placement

Baker, Paul Maynard, from Crab Orchard, W. Va., to Saunders Grove, Moneta, Va.
Banks, Wilbert, to James Creek, Marklesburg, Pa.
Beam, Nicholas, to Pleasant Hill, Ohio
Craddock, Mark, to Maple Grove, Lexington, N.C.
Gregersen, Joe, to English River, South English, Iowa
Kerkove, David, to Plymouth, Ind.
Ritchey Martin, Donna and Tim, from Mt. Morris, Ill., to Grossnickle, Myersville, Md.
Wagner, John, to Salem, Lenox, Iowa

Editorial

Getting on top of things

I'm behind in my work again. Rather, still. I haven't figured out this business of a monthly deadline; I can't seem to get everything done in a month. It's embarrassing and discouraging. But I'm determined not to let "behind" become a permanent condition, even though I have lots of company in it. Perhaps the church, as a school for simplicity, can help me and others catch up and get back on top of things.

Teaching simplicity about time and work would be a useful ministry for the Church of the Brethren. As Joan Chittister reminds us in *Wisdom Distilled from the Daily*, "Time is the treasure that cannot be recovered and must not be taken for granted. Time is all we have to make our lives bright-colored, warm, and rich. . . . Time spent in gray, dry aimlessness is a prison of the thickest walls. But good work that leaves the world softer and fuller and better than ever before is the stuff of which human satisfaction and spiritual value are made. There will come a moment in life when we will have to ask ourselves what we spent our lives on and how life in general was better as a result of it. On that day we will know the sanctifying value of work."

Yet judging from the behavior of some of us, the church may seem to be the last place to turn for practical guidance on time management. Some of the most faithful people I know are also overburdened and overwhelmed. Church leaders are among those who complain the most about overwork and lack of time. One said recently he was stretched to the limit, with no time for regeneration. Another said meetings consume too much of her time, but she felt powerless to do anything about that. And another seemed resigned to the fact that world events divert attention from work that needs to be done. "That's the nature of this work," he wrote.

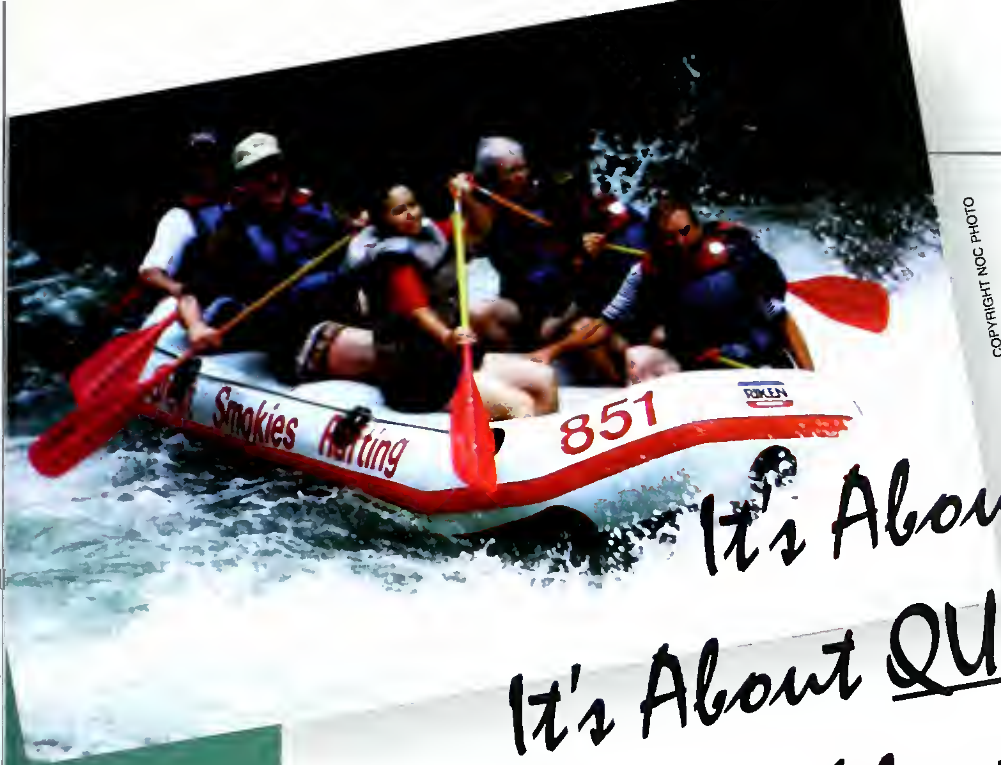
From the way some of us behave, it's easy to infer that it's the nature of the Christian life to be behind in our work. Because God set so high a standard for us, we can't possibly measure up, so we must ever strive to do more. Because we are chosen to serve, our work is never done. In our subconscious minds, we carry around the thought that we must never say no to Jesus. And it doesn't help that we who work in the church are such a merciful group. There is rarely a whip cracked in response to a confession of not getting work done; the response is usually, "Join the crowd." Working in a downsized organization presents its own set of problems—and excuses. It's easy to see why my colleagues and I feel like victims sometimes.

We need to get over it! Even though I occasionally indulge in the victim mentality, I don't buy into it. Ther is enough old-fashioned sloth in my life for me to know that getting rid of even some of it will change things for the better. And for the rest, I'm convinced that Jesus w help me if I try. It is wrong to live constantly overworked, overwhelmed, and behind. When Jesus said "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly," h was talking abundant joy, not the weight of the world. The struggle to get on top of things is a spiritual struggle. To see good use of work time as an act of Christian discipline and obedience is a first step.

It is one thing to resolve to do better, but getting fro there to the top of things is a climb. It doesn't help that time management is such a mundane problem, with no of the glamour or importance of the battles against hunger and war. I started, mundanely enough, by buyin a pocket computer to keep my calendar and to-do list. (does little that a notebook won't do, but because it's an expensive gadget I use it more.) Then I bought a time management book, with useful chapters on "Inadequat Planning," "Telephone Interruptions," "Procrastination "Drop-in visitors," "Meetings," and "Travel." The book begins: " *'I just didn't have enough time.'* Yes you did. You had all the time there is. You had the same 24 hour the same 1,440 minutes, that everyone else did. What you didn't have are the skills of managing the time that' available to you."

The key is progress, not perfection. I've been into thi subject before, but it's time to get into it again, and I'm started. A wise person was asked what we do in the church: "Oh, we fall and we get up, we fall and we get up, we fall and we get up."

It helps to know these problems have been around for awhile. In the 17th century Jeremy Taylor, chaplain to King Charles I, wrote on the subject, "Care of our Time" "God has given us a short time here on earth. Yet upon this short time eternity depends. We must remember that we have a great work to do, many enemies to conquer, many evils to prevent, much danger to encounter, many difficulties to be mastered, many needs to serve, and muc good to do. . . . We need not fear that care of our time wi be a snare to us, or that duty must end in scruple, vexation, and fears. Remember that the life of every person c be so ordered (and indeed must be) that it may be a perpetual service to God." —FLETCHER FARRAR



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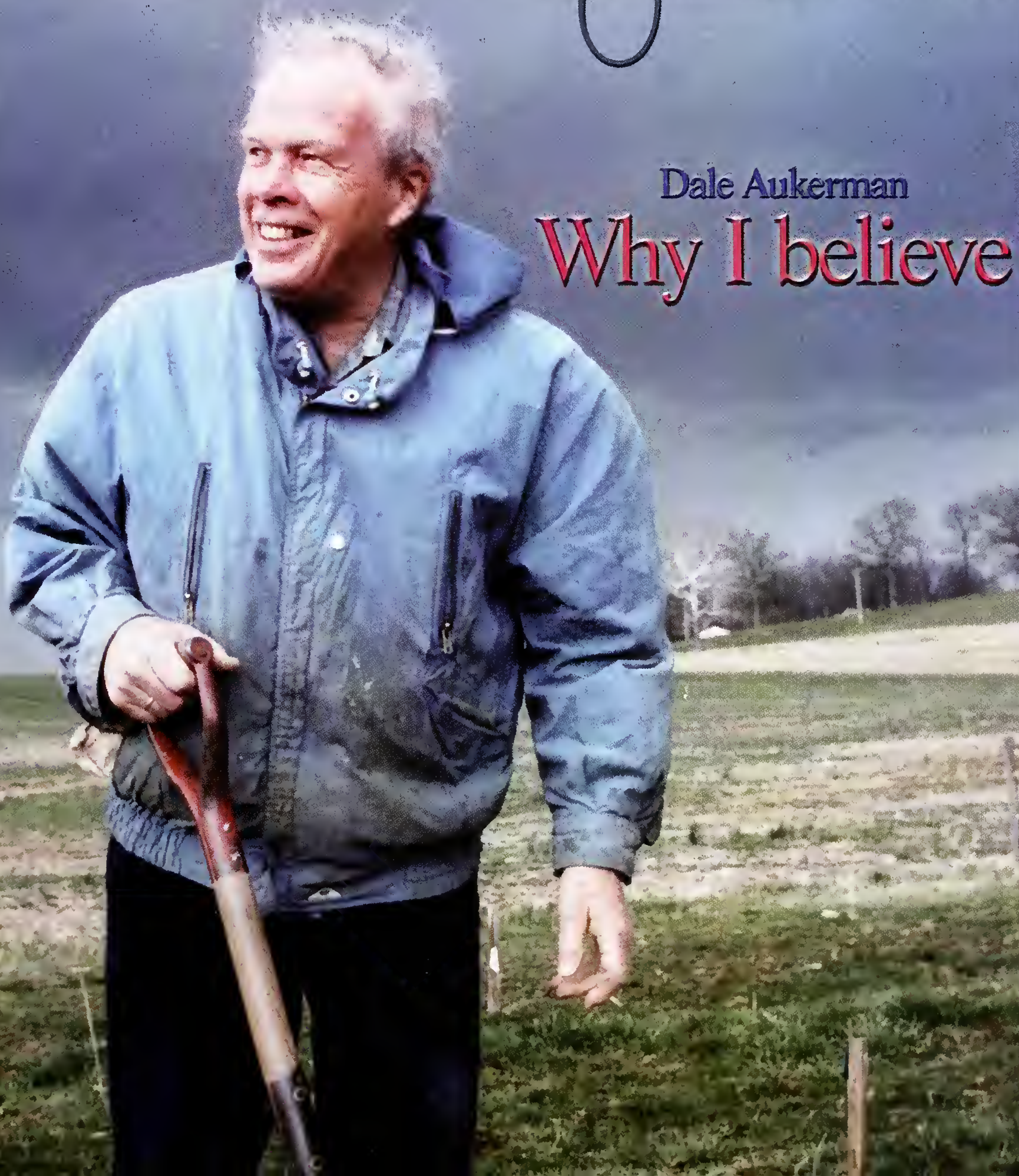
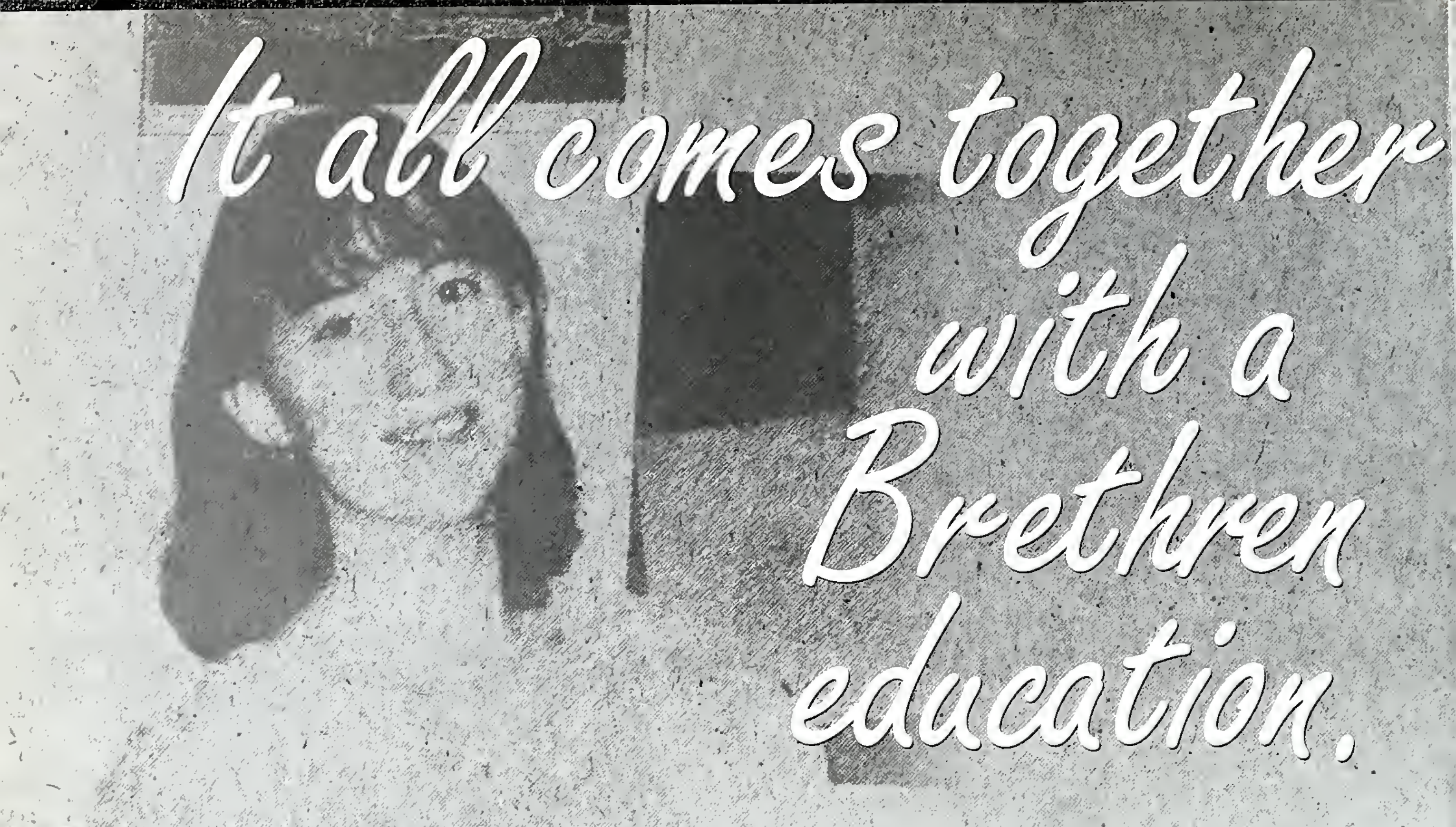
Messenger



Dale Aukerman

Why I believe

It all comes together with a Brethren education.



Jenny Stover '97
McPherson College

"A wholistic education is completed outside the walls of the classroom. Through the opportunities supported by the college, I was able to extend myself and grow. I was involved with service projects, choir tours, travel abroad, church camp counseling and various on-campus organizations.

One specific strength of a Brethren college is the smallness of the campus community. Having the opportunity to build close relationships and develop interpersonal skills was an invaluable part of my learning. Now, as I pursue continued education in the social work field, I am grateful for the small-school experience and my multi-faceted education.

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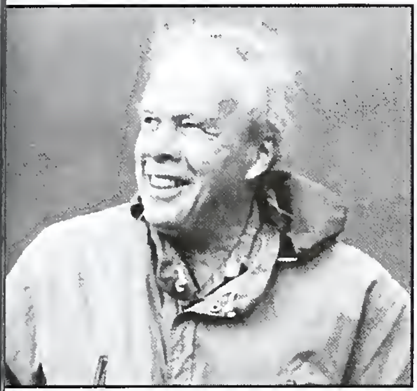


On the cover: Photographer Ken Koons of the *Carroll County Times*, Westminster, Md. has been photographing Brethren preacher and writer Dale Aukerman rather intensely for the past two and a half ears. Soon after Aukerman received a diagnosis of terminal ng cancer, Koons, asked and received permission to docuent his life through the course of his illness. Koons allowed ESSENGER to use his photographs to illustrate Aukerman's estimonial article, "Why I believe."

Koons has become well-acquainted with Aukerman on the ssignment. "Many people try to teach others how to live," oons told MESSENGER. "Few live what they teach. Dale ollows what he believes. I've never seen him falter. He's an mazing fellow."

The newspaper used Koons' remarkable photographs, and rticles by Scott Blanchard, in a seven-part series called Living with Dying," published last December. The series was eprinted as a tabloid and may be ordered for the price of ostage from Carroll County Times, 201 Railroad Ave., Box 46, Westminster, Md. 21158. The series is also available on he newspaper's Web site at ww.carrollcounty.com/dying/index.htm.

Features

10 God's Message in the Stars

Faced with terminal illness, Dale Aukerman has been facing ultimate questions more intensely than ever. He has examined his faith, and this month shares his questions, and answers, with MESSENGER readers. The results are not surprising, but they are inspiring.

15 My dirty secret

Jean Lersch, of St. Petersburg (Fla.) First Church of the Brethren, questions why one part of God's creation has been demeaned and despised. With her mop in the closet and tongue in her cheek, she advocates making peace with a ubiquitous foe.

16 Caring Ministries 2000

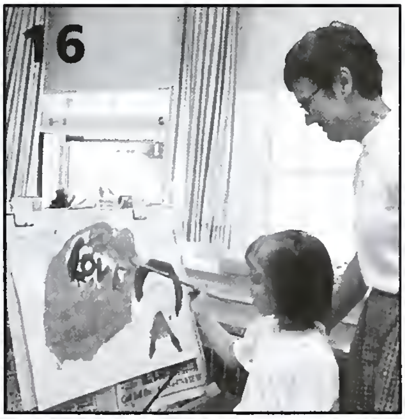
"Be Transformed in Body, Mind and Spirit" was the ambitious theme of this year's conference at Elizabethtown College June 1-4, sponsored by the Association of Brethren Caregivers. Writer Tavia Ervin examines how transformation happens, and how it begins at events like this.

20 Ministerial leadership

In this in-depth interview, Director of Ministry Allen T. Hansell explains the important changes in the new ministry paper, and describes the feelings he encountered in visits to districts around the country.

24 Environmental justice

A Conference on Environmental Justice Ministries in the Church provided the occasion for Susan Houff Trudeau, a member of the Church of the Brethren Eco-justice Working Group, to reflect on connections between the environment and economic justice.



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From the Publisher

The cheeriest room in our home is the guest room, which benefits from having the only south-facing window in the house. I like having a comfortable guest room always ready to be pressed into service. That way we can invite anyone in at any time.

So we tend to have a friendly parade of houseguests that has included Brethren Volunteer Service workers on their way to projects or retreats, folks coming to Elgin for committee meetings, General Board members, out-of-town staff colleagues, friends returning to town for a visit. Sometimes we barely have time to get the sheets out of the dryer and back onto the bed before the next visitor arrives.

I treasure the three volumes of guest books that have been filled since I moved to Elgin in 1981. The pages document comings and goings of colleagues and friends. They offer greetings in a number of languages. They evoke memories of simple times spent together.

Our children have grown accustomed to meeting new people. The oldest tried out her two or three words of German on an Eirene staff member from Germany. The youngest snuggled up for Jubilee Bible stories read by the executive director of the Jubilee project. The middle one was pleased when visitors took in one of his baseball games. We parents are glad for the opportunity to give the children faces and names to attach to the work that we do, so that the ministry of the wider church becomes more real. Besides, we love having company.

On the flip side, some of my clearest memories of trips made are of the homes in which I've stayed. The sanctuaries and fellowship halls might blur together. But I can still picture specific homes in Missouri, California, Pennsylvania, Florida, Virginia. . . . The connections made last a long time: Occasionally I've run into someone who hosted me 20 years ago on a Juniata College choir tour.

Jesus made himself known to the disciples when he stopped to spend the night and break bread together. In the warmth and intimacy of our times together, as travelers on the road, we invite Jesus to be known to us.

Wendy McFadden

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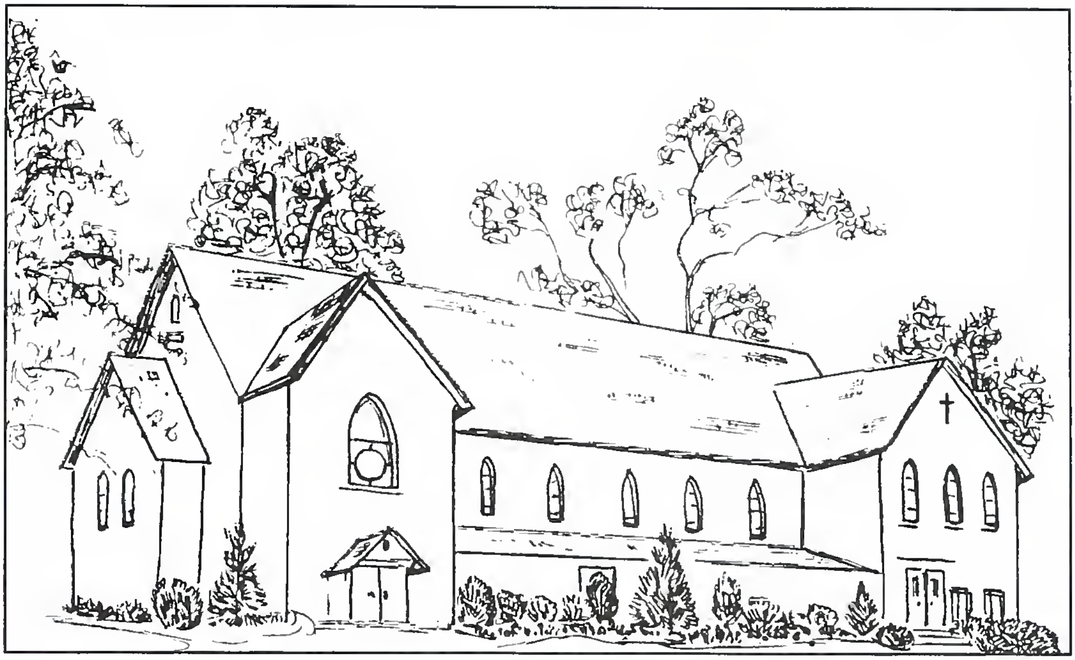
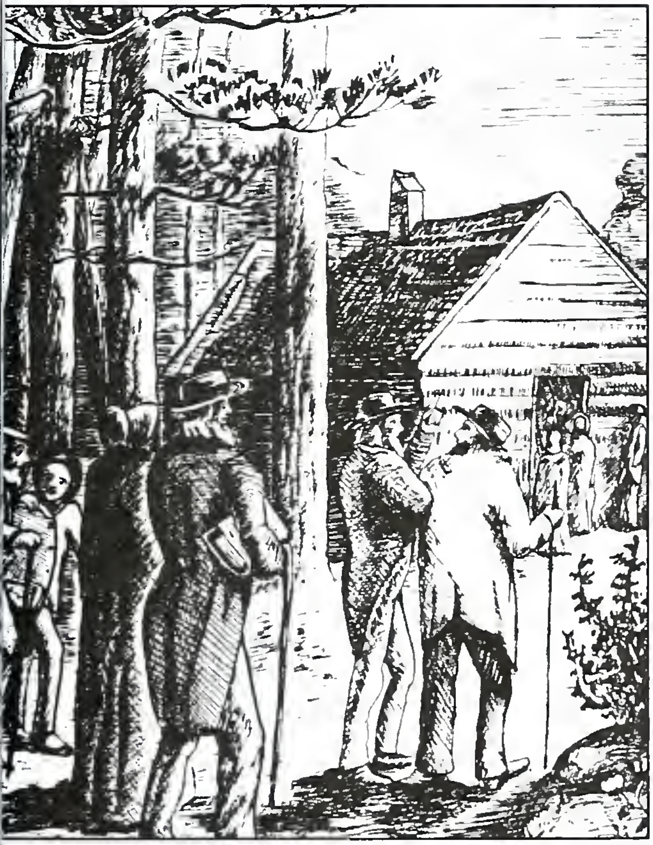


Coventry Church of the Brethren.

Coventry church celebrates 275th anniversary

Several events are planned to celebrate the 275th anniversary of the Coventry Church of the Brethren, Pottstown, Pa. The first is Aug. 15, a morning service beside the Schuylkill River. Scheduled for Sept. 12 is a visit by Alexander Mack, founder of the Church of the Brethren. Love feast with a historical flavor is Oct. 3, and Oct. 17 will be a trip to see the Germantown church. Anniversary weekend is Nov. 6 and 7, with guest speaker Bill Longenecker, a historical video, drama, and dinner.



Going to church in 1782.

On Nov. 7, 1724, Peter Becker, of the Germantown church, helped nine German-speaking immigrants living near the Schuylkill River in Pennsylvania to organize into the second Brethren congregation in America. Martin Urner and others who had gone to Germantown in December 1723 to seek religious help were the nucleus of the Coventry congregation. Six of them were baptized by Peter Becker on Christmas Day.

For many years they met in various homes, chiefly at Urner's. In 1772 a log meetinghouse was built on the forested southeast corner of the Urner property. The present Coventry church building is on the same corner.

During the 20th century, enthusiasm for missions at Coventry has been high. Stover Kulp, from this congregation, helped to found the mission work in Nigeria. Several others from the congregation went to foreign lands.

Today the formerly rural area around the church has few farms. Instead of crops, the fields are sprouting new homes everywhere. The church seeks to draw new neighbors into fellowship and commitment to Christ. The facilities are available to Boy Scouts, a community senior citizen group, a garden club, and exercise groups. Youth Club and nursery school bring others into contact with the church.

Coventry has been active in its community from the early 18th century to the close of the20th century. But its focus now is on the 21st century.—Dorothy N. Lloyd

Joy on Easter Sunday: *Shawn Jorgensen, being baptized by David "Skip" Ober Miller, co-pastor of the South Bay Community Church of the Brethren, Redondo Beach, Calif. "The enclosed photograph is so joy-full that we just had to share it," writes co-pastor Janet Ober Miller.*

Brethren's Home earns accreditation

In March the Brethren's Home Retirement Community in Greenville, Ohio. received notification from the Continuing Care Accreditation Commission in Washington, D.C., that it had been accredited as a Continuing Care Retirement Community.

The Continuing Care Accreditation Commission is the nation's only accrediting body for continuing care retirement communities. Of the approximately 5,700 retirement communities nationwide, only 265 have completed the CCAC process and been fully accredited.

Spooked deer crashes into Lititz church

A young buck crashed through a window and into the Lititz (Pa.) Church of the Brethren on May 7. After that the confused and injured deer left a trail of blood and broken glass inside the church as it crashed through two more windows. Finally the animal collapsed in the choir section. Because of concern for the safety of children attending daycare in another part of the building, a game commission officer decided to euthanize the animal and shot it with a rifle.

"They don't prepare you for that in seminary," said Lititz pastor Bob Kettering.

Ken Zook

Brandon Grady

The inspiring voice of Brandon Grady

When Brandon Grady enters West Chester State University this fall, fellow members of First Church the Brethren, Harrisburg, Pa., will celebrate with hi the latest of many impressive achievements in his young life. Over the years, many have been inspired b his positive attitude towar life after he lost all his sigh to glaucoma by age 12. He has been an outgoing participant in many aspects o church life, and he is especially known for his joyful and moving singing.

His singing garnered Brandon top chairs in the state chorus, and he has

"A Pleasant View" *book committee at the book dedication at the Pleasantville Church of the Brethren. From left to right, front row: H. Austin Cooper, Kathy Moser, Glenna Moser. Back row: Gary Moser, Shirley Moser, Barbara Moser, committee members. Not pictured was Barbara Hurst.*

Beloved pastor leaves a history book behind

The late H. Austin Cooper, who died Jan. 22 this year, is remembered through his book, *A Pleasant View.* It i a history of the Pleasant View Church of the Brethren, Burkittsville, Md., in stories he collected during his pastorates there, from 1943–47 and 1970–78. Cooper was a pastor for 44 years before he died at the age of 87.

The Dunkers (Brethren) came to the area in the summ of 1760, led by Elder John Schiefer.—SHIRLEY MOSER een a member of several elect high school singing roups. In February, he erformed with the All astern Choir in Carnegie Iall. At church he has een active in Praise and Vorship Team, youth ctivities, the youth and dult choir, and men's horus.

Brandon was featured in recent article in the Har- isburg *Patriot-News*, in /hich his high school hoir director was quoted aying, "I have never had a tudent show as much pas- ion for music, especially or singing." Brandon says is role model is Ken Aedema, who he first eard at Annual Confer- nce and then at National 'outh Conference because he is blind and ffers the kind of music I ike."

As he recalls his high chool successes, Brandon ays he has achieved two f his personal goals: "to ave those in special edu- ation viewed in a more ositive light, and to have igh school music pro- rams highlighted along vith athletics."

As he moves to a new hapter in his life, Bran- lon Grady will have ollowing him a large heering section filled with ersons touched by his aith, his musical gift, and is unique "vision" of ife.—HELEN STUTZ HOLLINGER, *First Church f the Brethren, Harris- urg, Pa.*

Ida Howell *with great granddaughter Lauren Buckler.*

Howell honored for a distinguished career

Ida Shockley Howell, of La Verne, Calif., has been recognized by the Association of Brethren Caregivers for her long and distinguished career relating to the church as well as to the larger community.

She is a native of Washington State, a graduate of Manchester College, and earned a master's degree from the University of Chicago. Her educational experience includes 10 years of high school teaching in Washington and Montana. She also worked in the administration of three colleges—as dean of women at McPherson College from 1937 to 1943, dean of students at Bridgewater College, and student counselor at Mt. San Antonio College at Walnut, Calif. At Mt. San Antonio she served with distinction for 15 years until retirement in 1968.

Prior to moving to California, Ida was married to Ellis M. Studebaker, who was administrator of Bethany Hospital in Chicago.

Ida later married Frank Howell. They both were partners in service to the community, the church, and the University of La Verne. Ida served as an officer of the Pomona Inland Valley Council of Churches. She was the first woman moderator of the Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren. She is an honorary member of the University of La Verne board of trustees and has served as a member of the board of directors of Hillcrest Homes, where she now resides. Locally, Ida has worked with the YMCA, AAUW, and the Pomona Fellowship Church of the Brethren, where she has served in several leadership positions.

Ida was a volunteer to Brethren Service at New Windsor, Md., for a year. For years, she was chair of the Brethren Health Education Foundation, where she was instrumental in helping many people secure loans for graduate education in the health field. She also was active in the Brethren Health and Welfare Association, where she touched many lives.

Above all, Ida is beloved for her generous and positive spirit. She has been and is a role model for many people in many circles.—JOSEPH J. SCHECTER, La Verne, Calif.

"In Touch" profiles Brethren we would like you to meet. Send story ideas and photos to "In Touch," MESSENGER, *1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120.*

News

Faith goes to work providing child care in five locations

Child-care givers of the General Board's Emergency Response/Service Ministries were kept busy this spring as ER/SM has established caregiving services at five locations throughout the country, including its first-ever response following an aviation disaster.

Four members of ER/SM's CAIR (Child Care - Aviation Incident Response) Team, who were trained in March, were summoned to Little Rock, Ark., to provide care for children affected by the June 2 crash of American Airlines Flight 1420, which killed nine people and injured many others. ER/SM is the only agency under contract with the Red Cross to provide child care services related to aviation disasters, and this was the first accident to which Brethren caregivers were summoned.

Lydia Walker, CAIR Team administrator, was on the scene eight hours after being notified by the American Red Cross. Karen Walters of Tempe, Ariz.; Sharon Gilbert of Fullerton, Calif.; and Anne Price of Laguna Beach, Calif., arrived later that evening.

The CAIR Team is an integral part of the American Red Cross' aviation disaster response. The 1996 Family Assistance Act mandates that the National Transportation Safety Board and the affected airline work together to provide services for survivors and affected families. The Red Cross has been designated as the agency to coordinate mass care, mental health services, and child care.

Child care services in Little Rock included meeting children at the airport, accompanying them on visits to the hospital to see injured family members, and helping distraught family members in decision-making related to the care of their children.

"Though every tragic event brings with it the pain of loss and injury, this accident in Little Rock gave the CAIR Team a 'walk-through' of procedures learned in our training," said Walker. "We all learned a lot and are especially appreciative of the respect and support of the American Red Cross, which has given us this additional opportunity to minister to children."

Plans are being developed for future training of additional CAIR Team personnel.

Meanwhile, a second team of 13 ER/SM child-care givers is at Fort Dix in Trenton, N.J., working with Kosovar refugee children. The first team of 11 began its work on May 25, caring for 180 children that first day. This work is being funded in part by a $2,000 grant from the General Board's Emergency Disaster Fund. This grant will help finance 10 weeks of volunteers.

Across the country in Phoenix, Ariz., nine caregivers from area Church of the Brethren congregations were called into action May 27 when the county condemned apartments that housed 15 families, leaving about 20 adults and 20 children homeless. Most of the parents are employed as farm workers and speak Spanish.

The families were sent to live temporarily in a school gymnasium, where ER/SM caregivers worked with them over the Memorial Day holiday. The families received permanent housing on June 1.

Two other child care operations, which were established in Kansas and Oklahoma following devastating May tornadoes, closed their doors in late May — 296 children were cared for in Kansas, 240 in Oklahoma.

Young adults challenged to examine their lifestyles

A challenge was presented to the 70 participants of this year's Church of the Brethren Young Adult Conference over Memorial Day weekend. David Radcliff, director of Brethren Witness for the General Board, used ocal and global facts on the status of he earth's resources in relation to he world's population to get participants to examine how their life choices as Christians affect the global community.

This conference, which for years had been scheduled over the Thanksgiving holiday, was held at Camp Woodland Altars in Peebles, Ohio.

Spirited music was led by Joseph Helfrich of Oakland Church of the Brethren, Gettysburg, Ohio. Helfrich also served as worship service leader along with a Bethany Seminary team and Shawn Flory Replogle, pastor of South Waterloo (Iowa) Church of the Brethren. Cliff Kindy, a Church of the Brethren member from North Manchester, Ind., and member of the ndependent Christian Peacemaker Teams, led a workshop titled "Radical Christian Action."

HOP ON THE CYCLE OF

Skit night at the Young Adult Conference *had Johnny Barr, Eric Barkey, and Andy Lahman performing, and Michel Moyer enjoying the entertainment.*

A song and cup routine *performed by Jedd Schrock was one of the highlights of the Young Adult Conference variety show.*

Disaster relief auctions raise money for people in need

Several recent disaster relief auctions raised nearly $100,000.

Over $63,000 was raised in this year's Mid-Atlantic District Auction, a record for the annual event that was held May 1 in Westminster, Md., and was attended by about 1,200 people. Money was raised from the auction, booth sales, and from the sale of donated return and seconds products by the Rubbermaid Corporation. Over $20,000 was raised from the auctioning of quilts.

Middle Pennsylvania District's third annual auction, held May 7-8 in Morrison's Cove Memorial Park, Martinsburg, Pa., raised about $25,000.

West Marva District's fifth annual auction, held May 8 at the Barbour County Fairgrounds, raised $7,136.51. The district's donation of $2,863 and an additional $1,000 donation from an estate will push West Marva's total contribution to the General Board's Emergency Disaster Fund to $11,000.

Major house-building project opens in Dominican Republic

A massive new rebuilding project in Azua, Dominican Republic, opened in June, sponsored by the General Board's Emergency Response/Service Ministries. This cooperative venture involves the Church of the Brethren, the Catholic Church, INVI (a government agency), and the rebuilding of homes for a 33-family village.

The Catholic Church is giving land

and materials for concrete walls. INVI will furnish sand, gravel, wood, roofing materials, and technical assistance. The Church of the Brethren will furnish cement for footers and floors and hire local skilled construction workers to supervise the work. The village families will provide 32 volunteers per day.

This initiative will produce two to three small houses each week.

Meanwhile, a $50,000 grant from the General Board's Emergency Disaster Fund has been allocated in support of ongoing Hurricane Georges recovery projects in Puerto Rico by Emergency Response/Service Ministries. The funds will be used to continue current projects and expand into new areas that include Rio Prieto, San Isidro Canovanas, and Culebra.

A $7,500 Global Food Crisis Fund grant has been allocated for the Armenian village project of Target Earth, a Christian agency with programs in Belize. The funds will help in the construction of a community education center where classes on adult literacy, health, and agriculture will be offered.

Washington Office joins ecumenical peace coalition

In May the Church of the Brethren Washington Office joined about 20 religious and peace organizations by becoming members of the National Coalition for Peace in Yugoslavia.

This group, formed by leaders of several major US peace organizations, called for a cease-fire in the Balkans.

Coalition members gathered at the White House at noon on June 3 to speak out for an end to NATO bombing. They also participated in a demonstration June 5 at the Pentagon.

More than 550 Church of the Brethren members placed their names on Jubilee 2000 petitions that weredelivered to the G-7 Summit, the annual meeting among the US and six other industrial powerhouses. This year's summit was in Germany.

The petition drive was headed by the General Board's Brethren Witness office in conjunction with its Washington Office. The petition originated with the Jubilee 2000 USA Campaign, which the General Board endorsed in March.

Heidi Miller

The first Older Adult unit *of Brethren Volunteer Service workers in recent years went through orientation at New Windsor, Md,. May 4-14. In the middle row are Sally Caracheo, Olive Peters, Sue Snyder, Joanne Nesler (staff), Joyce Ray, Berneita Smucker, and Don Smucker. BVS staff members are Dan McFadden (top) and Sue Grubb (bottom). The next BVS Older Adult unit is planned for April 4-14, 2000. According to McFadden, older adults may attend the orientation before making a commitment to accept a BVS work assignment.*

New church development committee begins work

The General Board's newly formed New Church Development Advisory Committee met for the first time May 11-12. The appointed committee includes a representative from each of the five Congregational Life Team areas and from the Council of District Executives.

Committee members are Marianne Pittman of New Windsor, Md.; Jim Rhen of Cocalico Church of the Brethren, Denver, Pa.; Jay Steele of Open Circle Fellowship Church of the Brethren, Burnsville, Minn.; Eric Anspaugh of the Cincinnati Church of the Brethren Fellowship; Gilbert Romero of Bella Vista Church of the Brethren, Los Angeles, Calif.; Virlina District executive David Shumate, and Glenn Timmons, director of Congregational Life Ministries for the General Board.

The committee examined the history of Church of the Brethren church planting, then developed lists on what Brethren have to share that is unique and reasons why new churches should be planted. It also talked about new church development challenges, particularly funding and leadership. Members then began drafting a blueprint for helping congregations and members find renewed vigor for calling new pasors and planting new churches.

The committee will convene again following Annual Conference and it welcomes denominational input. Contact Steele at jay.steele@worldnet.att.net or at 612-808-0161.

New Life Ministries expands resources for evangelism

New Life Ministries' board of direc-ors and management team met at he New Windsor (Md.) Conference Center in the spring. There they worked on short- and long-term goals and sharpened NLM's focus as t seeks to be a "resource to resourcers" for its four partner denominations — the Church of the Brethren, the Mennonite Church, the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, and the Brethren Church. Also serving as a member agency is one para-church organization, Shalom Foundation, publisher of "Together."

The group has been an independent Anabaptist evangelism ministry for the past 15 months and it has hosted two meetings of the Anabaptist Evangelism Council.

The group affirmed the continued development of LIFE (Living in Faithful Evangelism) modules for congregations to study and implement outreach plans. It also encouraged NLM to continue offering hospitality workshops in conjunction with denominational mission leaders and for hosting a third Anabaptist Evangelism Council, where theologians and practitioners in evangelism convene. Next year's by-invitation-only event will be held Feb. 19-20 at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

New Life Ministries became an independent organization on Jan. 1, 1998, when it was spun off from the Church of the Brethren General Board through the Board's redesign. As a General Board ministry it was known as the Andrew Center.

Bethany Theological Seminary *awarded master of divinity degrees to 15 students during its 94th commencement on May 8. Graduates included, front: Victoria Ullery, Kelly Burk, Barbara Sayler, and Mia Miller. Back : Manfred Schreyer, David L. Miller, Gregory Laszakovits, Peter Kontra, Steven Brady, Matthew Fike, Brian Flory, David Kerkove, Thomas Hanks, and Sam Smith. A degree was awarded posthumously to Janelle Pheasant-Pennington, who was killed in an automobile accident in August 1998.*

Staff changes announced for church organizations

Pam Leinauer has announced her retirement as executive of the Mid-Atlantic District, effective Aug. 15. She will be moving to Stuttgart, Germany, where her husband is being transferred. Leinauer began as associate executive of Mid-Atlantic District in 1985, and was called as executive in July 1997. She served as chair of the Council of District Executives from 1992 to 1995.

Scott Holland has been appointed by Bethany Theological Seminary of Richmond, Ind., to serve as assistant professor of peace studies and cross-cultural studies and director of campus ministry, beginning Aug. 15.

An ordained Church of the Brethren minister, Holland currently serves as pastor of Monroeville (Pa.) Church of the Brethren and as vice president of United Campus Ministries of Pittsburgh. He previously served as pastor of several Mennonite congregations. He also has taught as adjunct or part-time faculty in religion and peace studies at Westminster College, Carlow College, Duquesne University, and Ashland Theological Seminary.

Karen Jenkins, associate dean and director of International Education at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pa., has been named president of Brethren Colleges Abroad. She succeeds Allen Deeter, who is retiring after 24 years of service.

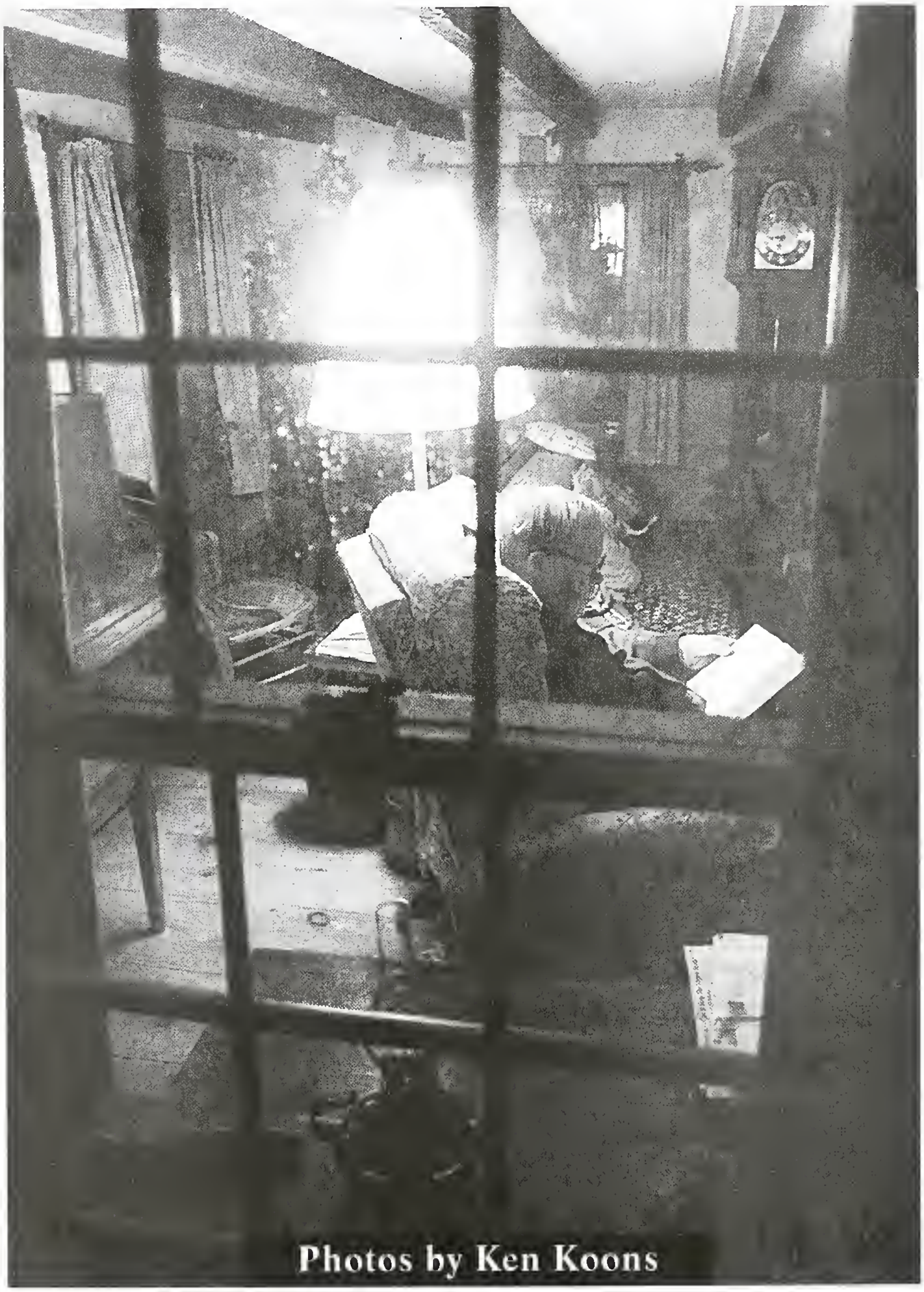
Jenkins, who has been published in a number of journals and who has extensive international experience, is a graduate of Fisk University. She earned her master's degree in International Relations from Yale University and a law degree from Rutgers University

BCA was founded in 1962 and currently includes programs in England, France, Spain, Germany, Greece, Mexico, Ecuador, Japan, China, and India. It serves the students of the six Brethren colleges and university and those from about 75 other higher education institutions.

Why I believe

Jesus is God's "Message in the Stars"

by Dale Aukerman


Photos by Ken Koons

Among the Bible passages *that hit home with Dale after his November 1996 cancer diagnosis was a psalm that included the blessing, "May you see your children's children." "It seems unlikely to find fulfillment with me," he said.*

After returning from a radiation treatment, I made the comment, "If this about God and Jesus is true, there is life beyond death."

A friend, who is not a committed Christian, pointed to my use of the word *if* and asked me, "Do you have doubts?"

I replied something like this: The possibility that the Christian faith is an illusion can hardly be dismissed. But I don't find myself pulled back and forth between faith and doubt. I have a deep assurance, a strong certainty, that the gospel about God and Jesus is true.

We can rather easily coast along in our faith. We have come to believe certain things, and we almost casually go on believing them. But if we suddenly find ourselves face to face with dying, we come up against ultimate questions. Is death the end? When we die, are we kept within the gracious care of God, or do we sink away into nothingness? After I received the diagnosis of advanced lung cancer, I needed to deal with those questions more intensely than I ever had before.

In a meditation titled "Message in the Stars," Frederick Buechner asks, "If God really exists, why in Heaven's name does God not prove that he exists instead of leaving us here in our terrible uncertainty?. . . What would happen if God did set about demonstrating his existence in some dramatic and irrefutable way?"

Buechner then presents a story. One night people look up at the sky and see the words emblazoned in the Milky Way, I REALLY EXIST. The message in the sky has a tremendous impact on earth. There is terror and awe. Many repent. Persons near death are filled with hope. Wars and crimes cease. Church services overflow into football stadiums. The message continues. Several years pass, and then one evening a child with a wad of bubble gum in his cheek looks up and says, "So what if God exists? What difference does *that* make?" In the twinkling of an eye the message fades away for good.

If God were to give that sort of proof of his existence, that would not meet our deepest need. We would know that God exists, but this knowledge might not make much difference. God has given us something far better than a message in the stars.

Why do I believe? Most of all because of Jesus. There are many reasons and factors that enter into my having faith in God, but Jesus is at the center.

In the first chapter of the Gospel of John we read about two disciples of John the Baptist, who started walking after Jesus. "Jesus turned . . . and said to them, 'What do you seek?' And they said to him, 'Rabbi, where are you staying?' He said to them, 'Come and see.' They came and saw where he was staying; and they stayed with him that day." (Biblical quotations are from the Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted.)

The call of Jesus to his disciples was, "Come, stay with me, and see." Day after day and month after month the disciples rubbed shoulders with him, they heard him preach, they saw him deal with the masses, they watched as he confronted adversaries.

The disciples were drawn to Jesus. They saw him as a most extraordinary person. He amazed and puzzled them. Only gradually did they come to understand just how extraordinary this person was. Here are some of the ways:

- At the close of the Sermon on the Mount we read: "The crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes" (Matt. 7:28-29). Jesus was not offering opinions. He was not saying in effect, "This is the way I see things." He spoke as one who felt himself to be in direct touch with ultimate reality. He claimed to have definitive knowledge of God, and he communicated it.
- We see it as essential for right living that a person recognize and own up to the wrongdoing in his or her life. But Jesus said to his opponents, "Which of you convicts me of sin?" (John 8:46). Jesus saw human beings as sinners, but he did not include himself in that.
- In the Gospel of John we find several statements of Jesus like the one in 7:29, referring to God: "I know him, for I come from him, and he sent me." That outlook is implied throughout the Gospels. Jesus saw himself as the one uniquely sent to reveal God and to do his work. He believed himself to be the central person for all the human story.
- Even the officers of the chief priests and Pharisees reported, "There has never been anybody who has spoken like him" (John 7:46 JB). The disciples reached that conclusion too, but they went beyond it. As Jesus taught them after the Last Supper, they told him, "Now we know that you know all things. . .; by this we believe that you came from God" (16:30).

Something like what the disciples concluded has been my experience. Something like that can be anyone's experience. We can come to the Gospel stories. We can listen, watch, and ponder. Like the disciples, we can reach conclusions about this man Jesus.

It's not just that I'm convinced Jesus is risen.
I have found again and again that this living Lord comes to me.

No one else ever saw so deeply and truly into the human situation or spoke with such authority. No one else ever expressed so well in teaching and life what right human living is. More radically than anyone else in history, Jesus called into question prevailing assumptions that hrough the millennia have shaped individuals and societies. Decisive for his life and teaching was his total rejection of lethal violence.

Around us are all sorts of religions and views of life. What makes sense? What holds together? What rings true?

I am convinced that Jesus spoke truth as no one else ever has. What he said and did came out of his unique relationship with God. Far beyond anyone else he had a grasp of what the human situation is and who God is. I trust his understanding.

Some of the critics of Jesus said he was mad (John 10:20). There were even friends of his who said, "He is beside himself" (Mark 3:21). There have been mentally ill people and occasional impostors who have made claims similar to those of Jesus. Either Jesus was who he claimed to be, or he was deranged, or an impostor. Only one explanation makes sense: that he was who he presented himself to be.

I give myself to the faith that God is like Jesus. As this carpenter from Nazareth said to Philip, "He who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). Jesus is the key to the mystery of who God is. There cannot be a more marvelous view of God than this, that God is like Jesus. God loves with the love that Jesus has put into our view.

The depth of that love is to be seen most of all in Jesus going to the cross. He took the hate, the ridicule, the abandonment, the excruciating agony. Jesus believed that his going to his death by execution on a cross was the will of God. In what Jesus did we see God's love for humanity acted out.

Jesus died on that Roman cross. His body was placed in a rock-hewn tomb. It seemed that his enemies had triumphed. His disciples had fled. All their hopes had been crushed. They had seen the defeat of what they thought was the coming of God's Kingdom. They were utterly distraught.

But then something happened. Jesus came back to be with his disciples again. He came back, not as he had been earlier, but as far more. His body still had the nail prints, but it was a spiritual body. The disciples could know beyond all doubt that right there with them was the one who had come from God, the one whom God had raised up to be Lord of all. The Word that was with God and was God had taken human form and dwelt among them (John 1:1,14).

The risen Jesus greeted the women at the tomb. The earliest written account of the resurrection was given by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:4-8: "He was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and . . . he appeared to Cephas [Peter], then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me."

At that time many of the

"How good to be able *to have a garden and to hoe in it for yet another year," Dale Aukerman said in June 1998. This year he has another flourishing garden.*

Throughout my life he has met me, directed me, rebuked me, inspired me.

closest friends of Jesus were still alive. They could vouch for having seen and experienced the risen Lord. Paul was saying that several hundred people were still alive as witnesses to testify to the reality of a resurrection appearance. One person can have a hallucination. Paul's vision on the road to Damascus could be dismissed in that way. But 11 people or 500 do not all at the same time have a common hallucination.

Near the close of Matthew's Gospel we read that the chief priests gave money to the soldiers who had been guarding the tomb and said, "Tell the people, 'His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep'" (Matt. 28:13). Through the centuries there have been all sorts of attempts to explain away the resurrection of Jesus. But if his followers had carried out a hoax, why would they have lived and died as they did? It could have been a delusion, but too many people were involved.

One explanation has it that soon after the crucifixion the disciples came to the insight that the love, goodness, and truth that Jesus had lived out was what they could still live for. It would have been like followers of Martin Luther King, Jr., deciding after his assassination that they must carry on his work. But there is nothing in the Gospel accounts or elsewhere to indicate that this is what happened.

What else but the resurrection could have transformed the shattered group of disciples into a band ready to challenge the Jerusalem authorities and face prison and death as they bore witness to this Lord? What else but the resurrection of Jesus could have transformed the Peter who fled from Gethsemane and three times denied knowing Jesus into the Peter who preached at Pentecost? What else but the resurrection could have been the impetus for the emergence of the Christian church, which within decades spread across the Roman Empire?

Dale Aukerman *has preached as much as his health will allow since his cancer diagnosis. He often uses his illness as a theme for his sermons.*

We are asked to believe that the one who lived a superlatively loving life beyond any other was raised from the dead. We are asked to believe in the rising of this one who claimed a role in relation to God such as no other sane person ever did. Is it that hard to believe that the one who lived the most extraordinary life in all of history would triumph over death and come back to be with his friends? Not if there is the God to whom Jesus pointed.

I think of myself as having heard the invitation of Jesus, "Come and see." I've gone with the disciples on a journey with this itinerant preacher. Through their accounts I have been given a closeup view of who he was. I have come to the same conclusions about him that they reached. I also have their testimony about his rising from death. The resurrection of Jesus is central to why I believe and what I believe. God has not written a message in the stars, but he has given exactly the message we need in the life, death, and rising of Jesus.

But it's not just that I am convinced in my mind that Jesus is risen. I have found again and again that this living Lord comes to me. I have not seen the risen Jesus with my eyes or touched him with my hands as the disciples did. But throughout my life he has met me, directed me, rebuked me, inspired me.

When I talk with persons without Christian faith who might be interested in checking it out, I often say something like this: "There are the accounts about Jesus. Read them, immerse yourself in them, come to your own con-

This Lord will step out of Bible stories to meet you and to lay hold on your life.

clusions. We have the accounts of the resurrection of Jesus. Ponder them. These questions about Jesus are the most important questions you can ask and answer. If you are really seeking to find out the truth concerning Jesus, an amazing thing can happen. Jesus will no longer be simply a historical person in those events nearly 2,000 years ago. This Lord will step out of those stories to meet you and to lay hold on your life."

An internationally known evangelist was giving a series of messages on a university campus. In the discussion time a student challenged him with skeptical questions. Several days later the evangelist met the student at breakfast. The student said, "I still don't believe what you are saying. But since we talked, I have read through the New Testament." The evangelist replied, "You're on the way." Those who seek that ardently will find.

Prayer Changes Things

"This wall plaque is there all the time," *Dale said. "I generally overlook it. But when I notice it, what it says speaks so directly to what we experience in the struggle with cancer."*

I believe in God most of all because of what I have seen in Jesus. I believe that he comprehended the truth about our human situation, and I yield myself to his understanding. I believe that God gives eternal life beyond death, because Jesus promised us that.

I don't know what is ahead for me. But I hope to be sustained in the faith that the disciples declared on the first Easter evening, "The Lord has risen indeed!" (Luke 24:34).

Dale Aukerman, of Union Bridge, Md., is a writer, preacher, and peace advocate. In his April 1998 article "Living with dying," he shared with MESSENGER *readers insights on the effect that a diagnosis of terminal lung cancer has had on his faith. By April this year the cancer had spread to his brain, and he received radiation treatments.*

A journal Aukerman has kept during his illness is to be published next year by Brethren Press.

Brethrening

LIBERTY
1996

The child's mite

During our church's recent remodel I held a Sunday school class in the back pew of the sanctuary. One Sunday, while trying to organize myself in the transition from class to worship, I looked up and saw my four-year-old son, Joseph, going through my purse. I told him he was not allowed to do that and to stop.

He then looked up at me and wailed, "But you haven't given me my coin. I NEED my coin. I need my coin for the give-it-up time!"—STEPHANIE K. VARNADORE

Stephanie Varnadore is a member of Columbia Lakewood Community Church, Seattle, Wash.

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God knows my dirty secret

By Jean Lersch

"In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens . . . the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground" (Gen. 2:4-7).

Human beings, the crown of creation, were formed from dust. James Weldon Johnson, the famous poet, expressed it this way, in his poem, "The Creation":

Up from the bed of the river God scooped the clay,
And by the bank of the river He kneeled him down;
And there the great God Almighty,
Who lit the sun and fixed it in the sky,
Who flung the stars to the most far corner of the night,
Who rounded the earth in the middle of his hand,
This Great God,
Like a mammy bending over her baby,
Kneeled down in the dust toiling over a lump of clay
Till he shaped it in his own image;

Then into it he blew the breath of life,
And man became a living soul.
Amen. Amen.

Both the writer of the book of Genesis and this more recent wordsmith express God's high regard for dirt. So why have we made dust, the metaphoric raw material of the human body, our enemy?

Our culture dictates its removal and implies shame for its presence. One television ad pictures a hostess, a dervish polishing the room. She has just learned that guests are on their way. By the time the doorbell rings, no signs of this sacred element are evident. Mahogany furniture, knick-knack shelves, and linoleum floors shine like counterfeit mirrors.

Unlike in the Garden of Eden, dust balls underneath beds or hovering in corners bring disgrace to today's homemaker. Why has this hallowed substance been so demeaned? Why must it be our foe?

We pollute our atmosphere with fluorocarbons from spray cans, dry our skin with caustic cleaning chemicals, break our bones falling from ladders, and ruin our dispositions engaging in unpleasant futile expenditure of time and energy, as we try to wipe out dirt. But that is as likely as seeing Martha Stewart serve hot dogs on paper plates. Dirt is here to stay. God ordained it.

In my early married life I let my mother's example and women's magazines dictate a cleaning ritual. At the end of every week, usually Friday, like a household grunge, I dutifully gritted my teeth and armed myself with battle gear. I attacked sediment and smudges with dust cloths, spray, scrub bucket, rags, lemon-fresh or pine-scented cleaning agents, mops, vacuum sweeper, and angry energy. At the end of the day, the foe wiped out (or so I thought), the house smelled and looked antiseptic, thoroughly clean and austere.

Now, after 46 years of marriage, I've tried to make peace with my former enemy. When I detect a buildup of this specially consecrated substance, I squint my eyes and imagine it a beach with billowing waves. As the layers increase, my vision is transformed into a garden growing cheerful sunflowers and marigolds.

When the old compulsions raise their voices and force me to retrieve some of the old battle gear, now I'm more relaxed with the chore. I clean much less than before. And I always clean late in the day, my most unproductive time, never when my mind and body are rested for more important pursuits.

Occasionally I hear the vacuum sweeper motor or the squeak of glass cleaner on windows. Then I know my husband's level of grime tolerance has been reached. I'm sure at these times he is recalling his vow, "for better or for worse."

When I visited an aunt whom I hadn't seen for many years, I was delighted to discover she was even less dirt-driven than I. Under beds and in corners I found evidence of her respect for God's gift. She spent her days reading, playing the piano, entertaining her granddaughter, and watching the Los Angeles Dodgers on television.

But many places I visit are not like that: polished, uncluttered shelves; vacuumed rugs, the pile standing at attention; immaculate burnished furniture devoid of specks or stains; spotless mirrors, windows, and dinnerware; everything tidy, picture-perfect, like the women's magazines.

I wish more people would join my crusade to welcome this sacramental substance, dust. I really don't like being different. Perhaps I could start a magazine, *Honoring What Is Sacred in Our Homes.* Its pages would picture enticing scenes of cozy dwellings, a few sentimental decorations imperfectly placed, furniture mottled, windows spotted, and many bookshelves—all covered with the stuff from which we were made.

And God saw that it was good (Gen. 1).

Jean Lersch is a member of St. Petersburg (Fla.) First Church of the Brethren.

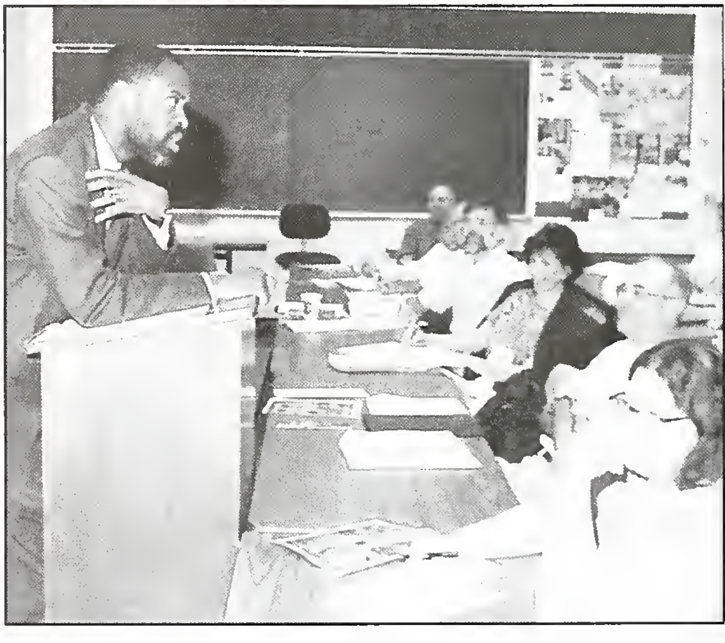
Transformation begins here

Caring Ministries 2000 was a place to be heard and to listen, to be challenged and to change

Story by Tavia Ervin

Photos by Nevin Dulabaum

One of the striking scenes found on the Elizabethtown College campus is Leffler Chapel, which was constructed about four years ago. This chapel and performance hall and meeting space was the site of this year's Caring Ministries 2000 plenary sessions, other special events, and exhibits.



Staccato Powell, deputy general secretary of the National Council of Churches, draws chuckles from his Caring Ministries 2000 workshop participants as he explains that he is a "salesperson" for God, not a member of God's "management team."

On my last day at Caring Ministries 2000 I came into Leffler Chapel at Elizabethtown College looking for a good seat for the morning's keynote session. My friend and I spotted a vantage point in the upper pews on the main floor and headed that way. A solitary person sat at the end of the pew and as she saw us coming she smiled and moved down to make room for us. I sank down into the comfort of that warmed space she left for me in the middle of that big chilly auditorium and suddenly what I had heard and seen and experienced at this conference came clearly into focus for me.

"Be Transformed In Body, Mind and Spirit" is an ambitious theme for a four-day conference. After all, I thought when I received my materials in the mail, transformation is not easy. How are we transformed in the church? How is the church transformed? Transformation comes slowly. What brings it about? An encounter with God. What brings about an encounter with God? Community, Spirit, the Word, worship. I brought these thoughts with me to the conference in the hope that my understanding of them would deepen as the week progressed. I was not disappointed.

Like my brief encounter with that sister in the auditorium, at its core the conference was about sitting in the warmth of each other's faith and experience — about making room for one another to speak and to listen. In his opening remarks to the conference, ABC Executive Director Steve Mason said that the purpose of the conference was to both "comfort" and "challenge" attendees with a variety of presenters and session topics. He encouraged us to both share what we had to offer as individuals and to participate fully in the conference program that had been planned for us. The result was a week of opportunities to experience those things which truly do lead to the transformation of the body, mind, and spirit: compassionate Christian community, spirit-filled worship, inspired preaching and teaching of the Word, and the honest discussion and exchange of ideas.

The foundational message of transformation for our church, our congregations, and ourselves was woven into a wide variety of forums and brought to us by individuals with different backgrounds and perspectives.

The opening message delivered by Staccato Powell, deputy general secretary for National Ministries for the National Council of Churches in Christ, exhorted us to embrace and live out our status as "resident aliens" in this world, living here but not calling this our true home. He preached from Philippians 3:20-21: "But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body." He told us, "It is marvelous to let your light shine and to let others know whose you are."

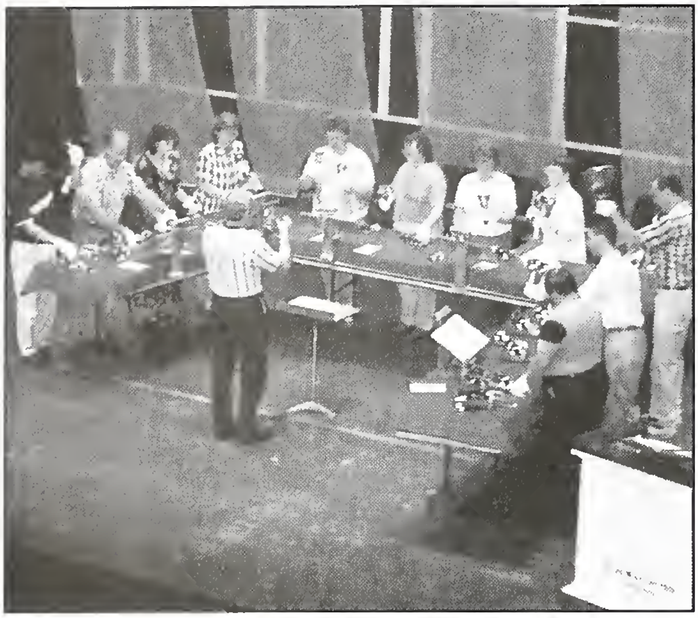
Bible study, led by Barbara Lundblad, began each day of Caring Ministries 2000. Lundblad, a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, is known for her messages as a speaker on The Protestant Hour radio program.

Daily Bible study with Barbara Lundblad , a regular preacher on "The Protestant Hour" radio program and associate professor at Union Theological Seminary, opened our minds afresh to the transformational power of the Word and to God's ability to raise up what we would keep down. Looking at stories of healing in the book of Luke, she challenged us with questions like, "What would it take to heal your infirmity of spirit?" and "Must one person's liberation always be another person's threat, or does Jesus have the power to heal all?" Her teaching about Jesus' healing of unexpected people in unexpected circumstances called us to look at our own healing and transformation as Christian caregivers, and our approach to the ministry of caring.

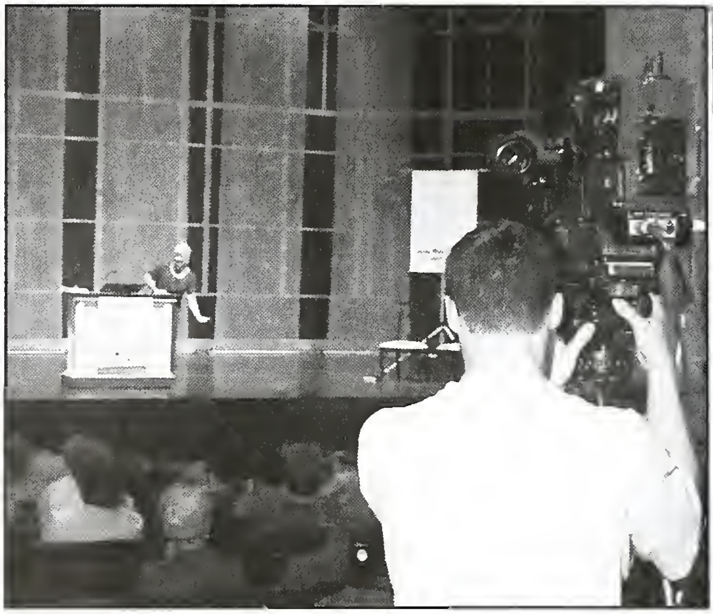
This dovetailed nicely with the conference's 69 session offerings with titles like, "Necessity of the Second Birth for Caring," "HIV/AIDS and the Congregation: Are You Prepared to Respond?," "Caring Evangelism," and "Creating a Safe Place to Share What Really Hurts."

These provided plenty of opportunity to be both comforted and challenged and to ask and answer the vital questions brought out in our Bible study, which are central in our caregiving ministries. Do we want to be transformed in ways that God has in mind for us? When we minister to people, do we do it with a preconceived notion of how that ministry will transform them or are we willing to let God do the transforming as he will? What if we are transformed in ways that are unexpected to us, even ways that we may deem "undesirable"?

These are questions best lived with over time, not only for a brief conference experience. But the raising of these questions is why a conference like Caring Ministries 2000 is important to the church.



Special music highlighted the opening session, a worship service, with Joel Nogle directing the singing. Included in this service was The Bells of the Valley, a group from Codorus Church of the Brethren, Loganville, Pa.



Luke Walker of Black Rock Church of the Brethren, Glenville, Pa., followed every move of Bible study leader Barbara Lundblad. Based on Luke 13:10-17, Lundblad's lesson focused on "Healing the Spirit Bent Low."

Sponsors of Caring Ministries 2000, the Association of Brethren Caregivers, have a vision of service to the Church of the Brethren that is still emerging, according to Mason, the executive director. "We want to provide an array of resources to enrich and enable professionals and volunteers in caregiving roles." This biennial conference is just one way that ABC will carry out that goal. Its aim is to both "nudge" and "nurture" in a faith-based context, as it provides safe space for support of caring ministries and brings together a variety of perspectives and faith experiences. It is a blessing to be able to add these perspectives to my own as I continue to reflect on my experience at the conference.

In one of the sessions I attended, the discussion turned to each person's definition of a dignified death. They

Brethrening

Christina's skirt runneth over

Christina said nothing when the visitor joined the group around the quilt frame, her 88-year-old eyes struggling to follow her needle in and out. But suddenly her needle stopped in mid-air and she burst out: "You been Vienna? I been Vienna, too. Worked there seven years, lived in a refugee camp, two kids, my in-laws, my mom, no husband. Sam was prisoner of war, we didn't know where, maybe dead, maybe not. . . . Vienna, I *know* that town." Then with her face suddenly radiant she said, "That's where Mr. Ickes found us."

Of course, that's neither the beginning nor the end of Christina's story. At a time when our Brethren ancestors streamed to the US, her family left Germany in 1784 to emigrate to the breadbasket of Yugoslavia. There, between the Danube and Theiss rivers, they were "rich" in food, and life seemed secure for many years.

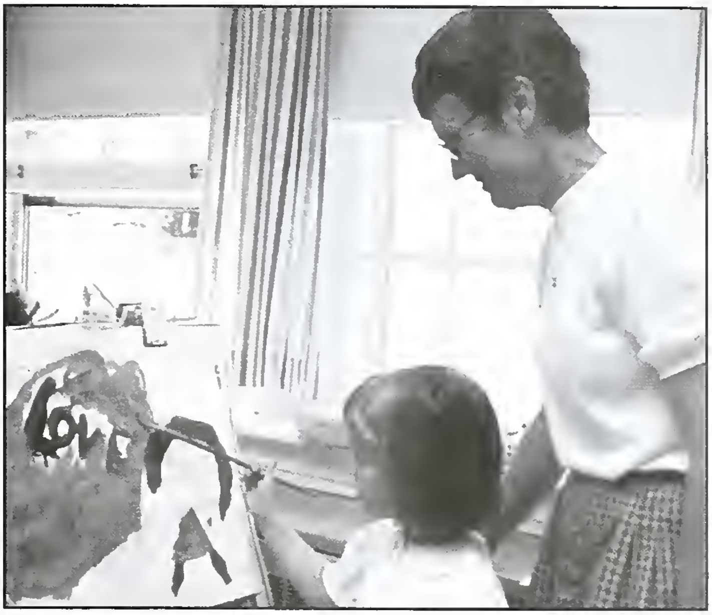
Nelda B. Ikenberry

Christina Beni

But, suddenly, World War II was breaking out. Her husband was forced to join the German army, and one night in the spring of 1943, with village drums beating, word came they must evacuate. A cart was piled high with one butchered pig, loaves of bread, clothes, blankets, and then, with other villagers, they began to run, and walk, and hide, and work, dirty and hungry, poor in life's necessities, but rich in lice and the spirit to survive. "God's hand was over us, it sure was!" she remembers.

When the war ended in April 1945, they were in a small village in Czechoslovakia. The plan was to charter a boxcar to take them across the border and then home, but it didn't happen that way after all. They found themselves victims of slave labor, pawns of cruel, greedy Hungarian and Russian Communists, even locked in a boxcar on the Austrian border. At last, "home" became an old high school-cum-refugee camp in Vienna and here, thankfully, they were deloused. Here Christina, son Peter

"It's wonderful being in the land of chocolate" is the body language Don Shank, pastor of Highland Avenue Church of the Brethren, Elgin, Ill., seemed to express after he sampled the world-famous kisses that are made in nearby Hershey, Pa.



Laura Shenk of Elizabethtown, Pa., completes her painting of "love" at Elizabethtown Church of the Brethren while Lavonne Grubb stands by to assist. Grubb provided this service each day for the children of Caring Ministries 2000 participants.

were all different from one another, but I remember thinking to myself that the one principle that everyone seemed to agree on was the importance of the dying person's power of choice and participation in the dying process.

I would say that it is just as important for the dignified *life* of our faith that we acknowledge the power of participation and engagement with one another in both the "comfort" and the "challenge" of being the church. Conferences like this one afford us that opportunity.

Tavia Ervin, a member of First Church of the Brethren, Springfield, Ill., is chaplain at Pleasant Hill Village, the Brethren Home at Girard, Ill.

---

and her father-in-law toiled long days rebuilding the rubbled infrastructure of a devastated city and it was here, after seven long years, she had the dream.

"I didn't believe in dreams, but one night I dreamed I was gathering eggs! In my skirt! Yes! I had to pull up the sides from the bottom and pull it together with one hand to make a basket and with my other hand I piled it full of eggs. Full eggs! All eggs, my skirt run over!" She laughed as she told the story. "Next day I come home from construction work the neighbor children come running out yelling: "Your husband's home, Sammy's home." She paused, "I don't know how he found us, but I have God's hand over me, no matter what."

From that day on, Sam Beni took his wife's place at the hard labor and soon Christina went in search of warm clothes for him. Brethren back in the US had put together bundles which had reached the distribution center near the refugee camp. "We found a warm suit, and in vest pockets I find little cards with the name Will Ickes, Heifers for Relief Program. I say I'm going to write this man and thank him!"

The letter, dated 1948, arrived in Dallas Center, Iowa, where Will was a farmer and a longtime member of the Church of the Brethren. Letters began flowing back and forth and soon Will Ickes, having helped deliver another load of heifers in Poland, came down to meet the Beni family in Vienna. With support of the local church, four years later, in 1952, the Beni family arrived in New York. Mr. Ickes drove them to their new home near the church in Dallas Center, jobs were secured for the men, and Christina's life was as full of happiness as her dream-skirt had been of eggs! "God's hand is always over us! It sure is!"—NELDA B. IKENBERRY

Nelda B. Ikenberry, a member of the McPherson (Kan.) Church of the Brethren, is a retired special education teacher. She researches and writes about women who live extraordinary lives. She grew up in the Dallas Center (Iowa) Church of the Brethren, where Christina Beni is a member. Ikenberry met her during a visit there a year ago.

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A new day for Ministry

Gathering feedback from across the church

F & A
Fletcher Farrar
Allen Hansell

As director of ministry for the General Board, Allen T. Hansell over the past year visited district ministry commissions in 19 districts, while Nancy Knepper, coordinator of district ministry, visited ministry commissions in the other 4 districts. Together they logged 38,000 miles, listening to reactions of commission members to the proposed paper on ministerial leadership and explaining how the new policies might be implemented. In his travels, Hansell not only received important feedback on the ministry paper, he also assessed the mood of the church.

Hansell, of Elizabethtown, Pa., served as a pastor for 23 years and as district executive for 8 years before assuming his current General Board staff position in October 1997. He served Church of the Brethren congregations in Wilmington, Del. and Mountville, Pa., and was district executive for Atlantic Northeast District. He was interviewed by Fletcher Farrar, editor of MESSENGER, on June 11.

F The name of the paper is "Ministerial Leadership Statement." You came up with the name "ministerial leadership" after a lot of discussion. What is its significance?

A

The church has wrestled with this for a long time. There is confusion about everybody being a minister, even to the point of saying that baptism is a sort of ordination.

By the name "ministerial leadership," this paper attempts to describe the purpose of ordination. We are called out or ordained to provide leadership for the church. Ordination is not just for personal recognition of an individual, although it is that. We ordain people for the purpose of providing leadership for the church. Those persons are different from others only in the sense that their leadership is recognized by the church. The main purpose of ordination is for the church to call out those who have those kinds of qualities the church needs.

F You dropped the terms "credentialed" and "set apart"?

A

"Set apart" carries a connotation that ordained people are different from others. We're trying to get away from that implication of professionalism.

Of course leaders need to be well trained. We don't have any problem with that. But our focus wants to be that we're not "called apart" so much as we are "called into." "Set apart" carries the connotation that you are "apart from." We want to develop the notion that persons are called by the community of faith, and they are "called into" an active leadership role. They are leaders among other sisters and brothers who are disciples. Some within the body are gifted, and those persons are called to use those gifts on behalf of the church. All baptized people are called into discipleship. Some of those disciples are called into leadership.

There is one sentence in the paper that spells this out: "An ordained minister, who believes in the ministry of the whole people of God, will understand ministerial leadership as a call to serve with and among brothers and sisters who are not licensed or ordained, but who are also called to discipleship and service through the rite of baptism."

F Will this document make it easier or more difficult to become an ordained minister in the Church of the Brethren?

A

We are going to be much more intentional about ministerial leadership. We have raised the bar some in terms of helping persons to discern the call and in terms of ministerial education. Ministry is terribly important in the life of the church. We need to call out the best people that we have, and we need to be clear about what the expectations are.

F You've raised the educational requirements?

A

The Ministerial Advisory Council deleted the section on the Three-year

Reading Course. If this is approved, that's where we would raise the bar in terms of ministerial preparation. At the moment we have the Three-year Reading Course. Many believe that program is inadequate. Some districts have stopped using it.

If the changes are approved, the programs administered by the districts would need Brethren Academy certification. The Brethren Academy would come up with a curriculum and a process for that district-administered training program.

We would hope to increase the number of courses, to increase the contact hours that students would be involved in. There are a number of people coming into the church through that level of training. In the future, there may very well be more persons coming in through that level of training than any other. So we're very concerned about what kind of quality we have there, and whether it is consistent throughout the 23 districts.

F Are you saying the Three-year Reading Course is done differently throughout the different districts?

A

It's pretty spotty. Some districts use it pretty much as it's outlined. Other districts have stopped using it altogether and have put something else in its place. Right now that program is in the hands of each individual district to do with what they want.

F What are some more of the major changes?

A

Another concern was persons coming into the Church of the Brethren from non-Brethren backgrounds. We have not had consistency. Districts have followed their own plans. Some have high standards; some are pretty lax. We've had some problems with persons coming in who did not understand the Church of the Brethren, who were not committed to the Church of the Brethren. That created a lot of conflict in our congregations.

F What did you do about it?

A

The 1996 paper called for a national interview committee, and proposed that no one would come into the church unless they received the approval of that interview committee. That didn't seem very workable.

We came up with what we call a Ministry Inquiry Committee. The person who wants to be recognized in the Church of the Brethren would be in touch with the district executive of the place where they wish to enter, and that DE would give her or him some basic literature about the Church of the Brethren—who we are and how we understand ministerial leadership.

If the person is still interested after reading the material, the DE would convene the Ministry Inquiry Committee. That would be the DE from the point of entry, someone from the district ministry commission, and someone from my office, either me or someone I would appoint. We would interview that individual. My presence there would be to ensure that we are applying the standards equally through all the districts.

We would have the person tell their story. We would look at their ministerial training to see if it would satisfy the requirements of the Church of the Brethren. We would need letters of reference to show that their ordination is in good standing at the place from which they come. We would ask how they understand leadership and pastoral authority. Do they understand the Church of the Brethren system, that we are congregational, yet we're also connected? We believe in the community of faith, not just individualism. We ask questions to get at how that person will fit into the Brethren ethos.

F They would have to be approved by the committee?

A

It's not so much approval as input. If the committee had concerns it might say to that district, "We see some problems. Move forward with caution. These are some red flags." But the district would ultimately have the decision.

F What difference would it make whether they are recognized by the Church of the Brethren?

A

They could not be a pastor in one of our churches if they are not recognized by the Church of the Brethren. That is not new, but it hasn't been enforced. Someone who has grown up in the Church of the Brethren needs the approval of the district board before they can be ordained. Why should we do less for someone coming in from the outside?

Ordination for that person of non-Brethren background could not become official without at least one year of probation.

F What are some of the problems you have experienced from independent pastors?

A

Independent pastors see themselves as called by God alone; they're not terribly accountable to anybody else, and they move into a congregation and see that as their own fiefdom. They see that as their church. They have taken whole congregations away from us and have created lots of conflict. They have not been terribly supportive of the congregation making its financial contributions to the district and the General Board. They have not been supportive of the congregation being involved in the district and in Annual Conferences. They run their own independent shop.

We want to avoid that. We want to make sure that a person not only understands the Church of the Brethren, but loves the Church of the

Brethren, and can promote the basic beliefs of the Church of the Brethren. We are a peace church. We have a system of polity that makes us interdependent.

We don't think the guidelines will turn away anybody who wants to serve the Church of the Brethren faithfully. It will turn away those who want to come into the church for their own benefit. They'll find it tougher to get in.

F Is there attention given to ethics of pastors?

A

There's a new section on pastoral accountability. We lay out very clearly that all ordained people, not just pastors, are subject to the 1996 Ethics in Ministry Relations paper. Districts will be required to conduct district-wide ethics training for all ordained people at least once every five years.

F Is there a new approach to testing one's call to ministry?

A

The Council of District Executives approved in 1996 a program called Readiness for Ministry. We encourage districts to follow that, and more and more districts are coming online. When someone is recommended by a congregation for ministry, that Readiness for Ministry program suggests that there be a covenant formed between the congregation, the district, and the candidate for licensed ministry.

Then we would expect that person to go through a series of tests, or "discernment instruments," that help a person better understand who they are. What kind of gifts and skills does this person bring to ministry? What are some of the areas of concern? What are some of the areas of weakness?

Then, ministry education becomes part of the process. If there are areas that need attention, some elective courses can be taken to deal with those issues.

F What has been the most controversial part so far?

A

I hope there are no major controversies. This paper has been through a lot of groups. This paper has been in a collaborative process for 15 months. We have worked out a lot of the problems.

But there is one that might emerge: We continue to affirm that old statement that a person needs a call before they can be ordained.

There are those who feel that we should simply ordain people and let them find their place later. District ministry commissions really bristled at that notion. They say their job is tough enough, and to lay that on them would make it almost impossible.

We outline nine areas of service and say that a person seeking ordination must fit somewhere within those nine areas. We're flexible with how you interpret those nine areas, but a person ought to be able to identify that their ministerial leadership is going to take a certain shape. Without that, a person could justify almost any reason for being ordained. That would make it really tough for district ministry commissions to say no. What would you say no to if you don't have those guidelines?

F The paper seems very polished and positive. But in your visits with the ministry commissions, problems surfaced. Is there work to be done to address those concerns?

A

I have a deep appreciation for district ministry commissions. But they are not always taken as seriously as they should be. There are those within the Church of the Brethren who say, "Who are these people to question my ministry? I've been called by God. What right do they have to question that?" That gets back to individualism over against a community of faith. We believe strongly in 1 Corinthians 12— that we're the body of Christ, that the body helps us discern our call.

It's tough for ministry commissions to say no. We have this strong feeling within us that if we say no that puts a roadblock in the way of someone who may be very sincere. Commissions bend over backwards not to say no, but sometimes in doing that they've been too lenient and have ordained people who should not have been ordained. In matters of discipline and accountability, there was a day in our church when the elders body had a lot of authority to act and their decisions were binding upon the church. District ministry commissions are given that responsibility, but aren't given much authority with it. It creates confusion and anxiety.

F What are we going to do about it?

A

In my visits I went over this paper, and outlined the commissions' responsibilities. I said it's tough, but you need to do this. No one else is going to do it. This is your job. And I made myself and others available to walk with them. They don't have to walk alone. They have a lot of backup help if they want it.

F You gave them a pep talk.

A

That's right. I find some incredible people across the districts who give many hours beyond their secular job to the church because they love the church, and they love the Church of the Brethren. They are glad for this kind of paper that takes a lot of oral tradition and puts it into writing. To lay the paper out in such a way—that we're going to relate the same way to all 23 districts, we're going to do the same thing everywhere—that gives a lot of encouragement to district ministry commissions.

F You say that a minister is "ordained for life." What does that mean?

A

The paper does away with inactive and emeritus ordinations. That means a person is ordained for life and that ordination should stay active for life. However, for it to stay active, a person must be involved in ministerial leadership.

We have about 950 pastors in the Church of the Brethren who are serving in pastoral roles. We have over 2,200 ordained people. I know that districts aren't in communication with some of those ordained persons, and are not really clear about what they're doing. What is their role? Is that person continuing to grow with continuing education? What's that person doing? There's no reason to keep ordination if a person is not involved in ministerial leadership.

F You said district ministry commissions expressed concern about the shrinking size of the church?

A

There is some anxiety out there about what's happening to us. Why are we declining? Why is it so tough to find ministerial leaders? There's something going on. How can we lock the back door?

I make the statement as I travel around the country that, while it's not all my fault, since I was ordained in 1967 the church has lost 50,000 members. Why is that? One answer is that we need quality leaders. What happens in our local congregations is often determined by the quality of leadership that's there. Does this person have the skills to pastor a congregation? I think lack of quality leadership has something directly to do with our church's decline. How can we attract the best and the brightest?

F The answer to that is to have standards?

A

We say to people, "We want quality people. This is not a Mickey Mouse organization. This is serious." If you're a family therapist, you have to do so many continuing education units to keep your license. Is the ministry less important than that? I think it's just as important.

Quality does not turn people away. It attracts good people who say, "We're serious about this. This is a place I can serve, with some standards that will help hold me accountable." When we raise the bar of quality we attract better people.

F Did you find that redesign is still a topic of concern in the districts, even two years after it happened?

A

There is anxiety from not knowing what has happened. The people in the pew wanted the church to redesign itself, to make it more cost-effective. They wanted to make sure that the General Board and other agencies of the church really understood congregational life, and were there to assist congregational life. The congregation is where ministry occurs. Redesign was intended to increase visibility of congregations, to help enhance congregational life. We have some pieces in place to do that. At this point there are a lot of people waiting to see what is going to happen. They just don't know yet. They don't see enough evidence of it yet.

But the recent numbers from the Funding Office showing an increase in congregational giving offer some real encouragement. Maybe the message is getting out there. Maybe things are going to be different. That's my hope.

F Have the ministry commissions noticed any positive changes from redesign?

A

Congregational Life Teams have been out there working with congregations. When I went out to visit 23 district ministry commissions I was there as a General Board staff person. I talked about the church at large. Persons were very appreciative of having someone from the General Board who cared enough to come and sit with them for three or four hours. Other General Board staff are putting forth an effort to be more visible in congregations.

Each congregation needs to be involved in its own community. The role of the district and the General Board and others is to help them do that ministry to their very best ability. But their role is also to challenge congregations to go beyond their ministry in their own community. They also have a big responsibility toward the district and the General Board. And to the world. Congregations don't dare turn in upon themselves. They need to be outgoing.

When I did the visits this time I wanted to test that. Are churches just concerned about their own, or is there a larger vision out there? I think that vision is there. We're part of a bigger picture. We're part of a whole. There is a love for the church as a whole, not just their own little corner of the world. Congregations are wanting the larger church to be effective, wanting us to spend our dollars wisely. They don't want a top-down type of ministry any longer. They want ministries that are done in partnership and through collaboration. That's what the church is hungry for.

Blessing of the World

Christians work for environmental justice

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SUSAN HOUFF TRUDEAU

"Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it; let the field exult, and everything in it! Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the Lord" (Psa. 96:11-12).

It's hard to pick up a newspaper these days and not read bad news about the health of our environment. The hole in the ozone layer grows larger, the rainforests grow smaller. Our wildlife is vanishing, and global warming threatens to melt the polar ice caps, flooding our coastal communities.

Care of God's creation is becoming increasingly important in the Christian community. In May, the National Council of Churches in Christ convened its second Conference on Environmental Justice Ministries in the Church, entitled "Christ is in Our Midst." More than 200 people representing more than a dozen denominations gathered at North Park University in Chicago where, through a series of speeches, workshops, and tours of environmentally and economically devastated areas of Chicago, they both celebrated creation and examined critical problems facing our planet today.

Through workshops such as "Transforming Your Local Church: The Environmental Justice Covenant Congregational Program" and "Working with Children and Youth on Eco-Justice Issues," attendees learned strategies for introducing eco-justice issues to their home churches. "Eco-Justice in the Old Testament" and "Eco-Justice in the New Testament" provided biblical support for caring for creation. There were workshops on health care, the Clean Water Act, and climate change.

Armenian Orthodox church members posed by a landfill before The Service of the Blessing of the World.

One key issue addressed was the link between economics and the environment. "Far too often environmental protection means protection for a certain segment of the population — the privileged and the affluent," said Rosetta Ross, professor of ethics at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Ga.

The Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston, an Episcopal bishop recently named president and dean of the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass., agreed. "Environmental change must equal economic change," he said. "There is no other way. We can't have one nation using so much of our resources when others must destroy their environments simply to survive."

"Our way of life is humanly and environmentally suicidal," said the Church of the Brethren's Shantilal Bhagat, one of the conference's keynote speakers. "Survival depends on coming to grips with what is wrong with the mainstays of our civilization."

Conferencegoers had the opportunity to examine firsthand the link between economic and environmental devastation. In the Garfield

Park neighborhood on Chicago's near west side, burned-out brownstones served as a reminder of the riots that rocked Chicago after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the 1960s. Vacant lots littered with broken beer bottles and cigarette packages lay next to apartment buildings where children played. On the south side of the city, Altgeld Gardens public housing project loomed eerily above the toxic waste dump upon which it was built.

Yet abundant hope could be found amid the devastation. In Garfield Park, Bethel New Life Center offers residents a way out of poverty and despair. Founded by Mary Nelson and other members of the Bethel Lutheran Church in Garfield Park 35 years ago, just after the Chicago riots, Bethel New Life is a holistic, faith-based community approach to urban revitalization that encourages self-reliance and mutual assistance.

Today, the organization offers job training and placement (with a special focus on environmental and allied health careers), builds new homes, and rehabs apartment buildings. Child and adult day care and in-home care offers a safe environment for the young and the elderly, so family breadwinners can go to work. Burned-out buildings are being razed, gardens planted.

The tours culminated with a visit to a landfill in the Lake Calumet area on the city's far south side. Once a heavily industrialized area, Lake Calumet lies placidly among the shells of long-abandoned steel mills. Mountainous landfills give the region the appearance of being not-of-this-world.

Yet once again, as in Garfield Park, life has returned to an area that previously lay in total ruin. Thirty years ago, Lake Calumet was a dead lake, poisoned by a toxic leak from one of the landfills. Its fish and wildlife were destroyed. After a loud public outcry forced the landfill's closing, the leak was capped to stop the flow of toxins into the lake. Today, more than 200 species of birds have been identified in the area, including 18 rare and endangered species such as the yellow-headed blackbird and great blue heron.

Issuing a strong call for fundamental change in living patterns was Shantilal Bhagat of the Church of the Brethren General Board staff.

Although a light drizzle had been falling off and on all day, the sun broke through the clouds as the delegation celebrated The Service of the Blessing of the World, conducted on a landfill by members of the Armenian Orthodox clergy. The service is a tradition in the liturgical cycle of the Armenian Orthodox Church, in which the church prays for the entire world and asks God's blessing to be on the four corners of the earth.

"Help us save, maintain, and enjoy the gifts of your creation, this beautiful earth and its fruits," prayed Fr. Haroutuin Dagley of St. George's Armenian Orthodox Church, Winnetka, Ill.

One of the great delights of an ecumenical conference is the opportunity to worship God in a tradition other than one's own. Each evening service was held in a different tradition: the Black Churches, Evangelical Lutheran and Episcopal Churches, and the Armenian Orthodox Church. The final worship service of the conference was ecumenical in nature. Sermons and music focused on God's love of creation and humankind's obligation to care for it.

As the conference drew to a close, those in attendance were charged with inspiring their own churches to become environmentally aware and active, even if the road to awareness is difficult. "You would think convincing other human beings to take care of our planet would be a no-brainer," the Rev. Charleston said. "We must stand shoulder to shoulder, side by side. Where else in the world is there a group who can stand up against this global threat if not the Church Universal?"

Susan Houff Trudeau, of Champaign, Ill., is a member of the Church of the Brethren eco-justice working group. Other members are Dianna Ullery, of Lacey, Wash.; Dar Miller, of Dillsburg, Pa.; Tim Kreps, of Bloomington, Ind.; Karla Hignite, of Richmond, Ind.; Sarah Stafford, of Bradford, Ohio; and Emily Clark, of Claremont, Calif. Shantilal Bhagat, Global Mission Partnerships consultant, and David Radcliff, director of Brethren Witness, serve on the NCC eco-justice working group as well as the denomination's working group. Other Brethren who attended the conference are Ken Edwards, of Jonesborough, Tenn.; Donald Flint, of Sterling Heights, Mich.; Elric Boardman, of La Verne, Calif.; Barry Barto, of Bear Lake, Mich.; and Don Stroup, of Brethren, Mich.

What you can do

The Church of the Brethren Environmental Working Group is in the processing of developing a Care for Creation program. The program, called Creation Care Congregation, will offer suggestions on how congregations or individuals can instigate changes that will help protect God's fragile creation.

Several programs are already in place. The "Beat the Heat" campaign focuses on how churches can help cut down on CO_2 emissions and help stop global warming. The Energy Star Congregation program, developed by the National Council of Churches, helps congregations make their buildings more energy efficient.

For information on these programs, contact the Brethren Witness Office at 800-323-8039; or e-mail Brethren Witness at witness_gb@brethren.org.

Letters

> *I can remember when the only supper held in the church was the Lord's Supper. I can't help wondering what the reaction of Jesus would be, if He were to appear today.*

Cover-to-cover superb

It's not often that I read MESSENGER cover-to-cover. I give it a quick once-through, then pick the articles that tweak my interest and that's that. Not so the May issue! As a 45-year subscriber to MESSENGER, I would say that issue ranks in the top ten. I read it cover-to-cover twice.

Beginning with the striking picture of Ken Morse on the cover and Howard Royer's superb tribute to Ken in "Grace to Touch the Dream." Then Wendy McFadden's excellent "From the Publisher" statement on violence, as well as the informative interview that Fletcher Farrar did on Kosovo with Walter Wink and the failed option of a nonviolent solution. Then Fletcher's editorial, on the back page, of his personal acquaintance with, and insights gained from, Father Ivo Markovic, a Bosnian Franciscan priest and professor.

Other articles—from Jim Kinsey's "In Praise of Small Churches," to Don Booz' "Pitfalls of Pastoral Counseling," to Ken Gibble's article on the millennium—were all worth reading and pondering.

From cover-to-cover it was a superb edition, one of MESSENGER's very best issues.

Don Shank, pastor
Highland Ave. Church of the Brethren
Elgin, Ill.

Ken Morse & beautiful words

What a beautiful, loving tribute to Kenneth Morse was written by Howard Royer in the May issue!

My husband and I grew up in the beautiful Church of the Brethren in Wenatchee, Wash. I really know my loving to just be in church goes back to those days long ago when each Sunday our family would enter that beautiful sanctuary. We later moved to Portland, Ore., and for a few years attended a Brethren church here. A few years later a Presbyterian church became our home church, but I never stopped taking care to keep MESSENGER coming to our home, just as my mother enjoyed it years before.

I love beautiful words, so I am sure that Ken Morse's words gave me the rich inner joy I reaped from the May issue. Just as other efforts that remain faithful, MESSENGER has changed and evolved into the beautiful issue that could finally come to be the one for May, honoring the gifted, sensitive choice person that Kenneth Morse became.

One night in the early 1960s, we were blessed to have him spend a night in our home when he was way out here in the West on some special mission that included our tiny church. It was an honor to offer a bedroom to a special guest. Now I want to show my appreciation for this gentle Brethren giant. Ken Morse would have been deeply pleased by Mr. Royer's effort.

Marie Brunton
Portland, Ore.

In praise of small churches

"In praise of small churches" in the May issue hit home with me. I was elected to the ministry in 1941 and retired in 1979.

When I was called to be a minister I was working for the railroad. I had received a raise and was assured of more. I was asked to take a promotion that called for me to be out of the state at times. But I didn't take it. Instead I served small churches, two of which grew to the size that they could, and did, support full-time pastors.

I retired from the railroad and my full-time church in 1979. Up until a few years ago I filled in, and had a large number of revivals.

We need revival in our churches now. There is nothing wrong with giving the invitation to come forward and accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

W. Randolph Abshire
Roanoke, Va.

Walter Wink on Kosovo

Thank you for the interview with Walter Wink on Kosovo in the May issue. It certainly answered a lot of questions for me about this terrible situation. It is very refreshing to get both sides of the story.

Gladys Haugh
Waynesboro, Pa.

Another view on violence

I appreciated Walter Wink's sound Christian perspective on the power inherent in nonviolence if it is used in the early stages of conflict. We shudder to think what might have happened in the racially tense 1960s if Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. had not become active at an extremely sensitive political moment. Might there have been a second civil war?

But I found it difficult to focus on Wink's view because he repeatedly called the Kosovo conflict US-driven, without acknowledging that it was a NATO project from start to finish. Although the US is a major participant, it is not possible to imagine that President Clinton could make France, Britain, Germany, etc., do anything they did not want to do. NATO is an organization designed to keep European conflicts from spreading to a more general war. It appears that this objective has been met, at least temporarily. Similar action in 1938 might have stopped Hitler cold.

The policy has been not only to "cow" Milosevic, but to encourage his unhappy people to rise up and overthrow his government. This is still possible. Mr. Wink also failed to mention that a peace agreement had been within reach after years of diplomacy, but the bullheaded Milosevic refused to consider it. Those who say, "Why don't we try negotiating?" have forgotten their very recent history.

Edward Huber
Philadelphia, Pa.

They left out something

I read with interest the interview by Brother Farrar of Walter Wink in the May issue. There were many poignant observations. I was heartened to hear someone so succinctly describe crucial elements of the American experience with power and violence, and its effect on our role in world affairs. I wholeheartedly agree that there are times when we can do nothing earthly to change things one whit.

However, I was astounded that both the editor of a peace church magazine, and a theologian and proponent of nonviolence, failed to get in print the one thing Americans (or anyone) *can* do at all times, in all circumstances: PRAY. Pray that God will restore life to us when "captured by the Serbs. . . murdered by the Muslims," as the editorial stated, whomever our Serbs and Muslims may be. Pray that we might all be "free and alive, and able to choose reconciliation over retaliation."

Jesus' friends could not stop the violence being perpetrated on the Son of God. Even the Son of God could not stop the violence. But he could, and did, pray in the midst of the violence: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," and "Not my will, but thine be done."

Pearl Rohrer
Shepherdstown, W.Va.

A house of merchandise?

I want to say a very emphatic "Amen" to Eugene Lichty's letter in the May issue [see "Give us more on giving"]. And in particular I applaud his emphasis on eliminating the commercialism so prevalent in our churches these last few years.

I can remember when the only supper held in the church was the Lord's Supper. There were no auction sales, or "other less-than-biblical activities." Only worship.

I can't help wondering what the reaction of Jesus would be, if He were to appear today. Would He again accuse those responsible of making His father's house a house of merchandise?

It grieves me no end that we have to merchandise to keep going, and can't keep God's house strictly a house of worship.

Don Snyder
Waynesboro, Va.

Remember China martyrs

Thanks for Messenger on tape. My wife Mildred and I have been subscribers for 63 years.

Our church bulletin recently named two Church of the Brethren martyrs who should be remembered for their stand for peace: Ted Studebaker and John Kline.

We should also remember three Church of the Brethren missionaries who were martyrs: Minneva Neher, Alva Harsh, and Mary Harsh. They died in China in 1937.

I knew Alva very well. We were both from West Virginia and we were students at Bethany at the same time. We were good friends.

I was at the 1936 Annual Conference in Hershey, Pa., when he and Mary were dedicated for the mission field in China. It was a most wonderful spiritual experience to be part of more than 12,000 Brethren waving white handkerchiefs, and singing "God Be With You Till We Meet Again." We will meet again in heaven.

These three loved the Lord, the Church of the Brethren, and the mission field, and gave their lives of loving service to the Chinese people. We must not forget their cause and sacrifice. They were truly continuing the work of Jesus.

Dorsey E. Rotruck
McPherson, Kan.

Lifting up a Brethren saying

While serving as a Church of the Brethren pastor for six years (concluding in 1998), I greatly appreciated and enjoyed learning Brethren folklore, folkways, and folk-language. One oft-repeated phrase among Brethren people has intrigued me, the phrase "to lift up." Where does that stem from—some German pietist phrase or custom that got translated into this English idiom and stuck in the Brethren consciousness?

For example, in the Messenger article by James L. Kinsey (May), he uses the phrase five times (three times in the same paragraph). Besides wondering if the phrase isn't redundant (usually, just "to lift" should be adequate), I'm curious if there's something in anabaptist history that's being preserved through this choice of words, but maybe obscured because newcomers like me are not aware of that connection.

Those who know the answer, please let me and others knows. It certainly does seem that this phrase is characteristic of the Church of the Brethren.

Carl H. Van Farowe
Johnstown, Iowa

Brethren name has served the brotherhood well

I am opposed to changing the name of our church just because a handful of "sisters in the faith" got their dander up over a distorted interpretation of the word "brethren." I have never thought of the name "brethren" as anything other than being neuter in gender, and I am of the opinion that this rendering is that shared by most everyone in the brotherhood.

Why spin our wheels on this when we should be expending our energy in solving the problems of the world and, I might add, our church?

The cost of a name change would be staggering. Every church bulletin board, every letterhead, every bank account would need to be changed. Why not channel the money instead into a fund to assist Brethren retired pastors who need financial assistance?

Second, the name Brethren is a well-known and highly respected name most anywhere in the world. Being a representative of the Brethren Service Project in Puerto Rico, for example, will get you immediate entrance into any government office, including the office of the governor. I know. I have done it.

Third, if your church doesn't embrace the qualities that are needed to build a loving and concerned fellowship, the name across the front of the church won't make one iota of difference. Nothing of significance is going to happen.

E. G. Carper
La Verne, Calif.

A letter to our churches about anti-Semitism

Recently we have been reminded of the persistence and pervasiveness of anti-Jewish bias in our denominations. In our peacemaking work in Israel and the West Bank we work cooperatively with Jews and Moslems; we are working with people who are taking significant risks for peace.

They reach out, beyond their fears, in the hope that people of different faiths can respect each other enough to live as neighbors.

Our relationships with Jews are threatened when expressions of Christian anti-Semitism rekindle their fears and memories of the role of Christianity in fostering hate and violence towards Jews.

Some of our churches are doing significant anti-racism work. Thankfully, there is no longer any credible theology undergirding racism.

In contrast, we still have many adherents who use theological arguments to support their anti-Semitism. We have encountered simplistic characterizations of the Hebrew Bible as vengeful and ungraceful, beliefs that Jesus' criticisms of some Jewish leaders of his day apply to all Jews then and now, and Christian Zionism, in which Jews become pawns with magical power in an end-times drama.

It is our sense that we need to undertake strong denominational educational efforts to understand how our theological assumptions have been shaped by an anti-Semitic ideology.

We can begin by acknowledging that ignorance of the history of Christian anti-Semitism is a problem, our problem.

Whether we like it or not, even whether we know it or not, we are the spiritual heirs of the Crusaders, of those who expelled the Jews from medieval Spain, of those who refused asylum to Jews fleeing the Holocaust; others remember even if we don't. We suggest, as one starting

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Services at Centennial High School
14388 N. 79th Avenue
Peoria, AZ Office # (623) 587-1911
Sunday Services 10:30 AM

Phoenix 1st Church of the Brethren
3609 N. 27th Street
Phoenix, AZ 85016 (602) 955-8537
Sunday Services 10:45 AM

Tucson Church of the Brethren
2200 North Dodge Boulevard
Tucson, AZ 85716 (520) 327-5106
Sunday Services 10:00 AM

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Interviews begin after August 23 and continue until the position is filled.

For more information contact:
Elsie Holderread at (800) 323-8039 or e-mail
eholderread_gb@brethren.org

point, that the following questions be addressed by our denominational educational and publishing institutions:

Where in our school curricula are our students taught about the history of Christian anti-Semitism? Are they exposed to modern Judaism as a living faith? Where in our seminaries are future church leaders given the tools to confront anti-Semitism in congregations they may pastor, in church conferences, or in ministerial associations? In our congregations and meetings, does the theology in our Sunday school curricula prepare our members for respectful encounters with Jews?

Many CPTers have made a commitment to confront anti-Semitism wherever they encounter it, whether on the street, in sermons or in jokes. We ask you to join us in this commitment, knowing that it will be neither easy nor comfortable.

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The opinions expressed in Letters are not necessarily those of the magazine. Readers should receive them in the same spirit with which differing opinions are expressed in face-to-face conversations.

Letters should be brief, concise, and respectful of the opinions of others. Preference is given to letters that respond directly to items read in the magazine.

We are willing to withhold the name of a writer only when, in our editorial judgment, it is warranted. We will not consider any letter that comes to us unsigned. Whether or not we print the letter, the writer's name is kept in strictest confidence.

Address letters to MESSENGER editor, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120.

Turning Points

New members

Ankeny, Iowa: Dennis and Wendy Tingwald
Arcadia, Ind.: Allen Rednour, Jake Rednour, Levi Rednour, Megan Brockett, Ron Brockett, Patty Brockett, Jared Knapp, Travis Knapp
Bakersfield, Calif.: Tricia McPherson, Krystal Shafer, Sara Diaz, Zachary McGraw, Lindsay Dumatrait, Richard Keeling, Katherine Keeling, Anna Blockley, Elizabeth Keeling, Jenni Scarr, Scott and Karoline LeCrone
Brandts, St. Thomas, Pa.: Anita Carbaugh, Julie Hunt, Steve and Robin Murray, Todd and Tammy Amsley
Bridgewater, Va.: Larry and Marilyn McDorman, Herman and Frances Miller, Barbara Pugh, Megan Button, Ed and Louise Callahan, Jessica Bachman, Jill Craun, Will Fawley, Casey Flora, Heather Galang, Kent Hutchinson, Callie McIntyre, Genita Metzler, Nicole Shank, Beth Stovall, Julia Stutzman
Brothersvalley, Berlin, Pa.: James Nair, Stacy Sayler
Bush Creek, Monrovia, Md.: Jennifer Musselman, Jill Wilson, Crystal Auton
Chambersburg, Pa.: Jeffery Banks, Daniel Baker, Graham Burkholder, Tom Deardorff, Johnathan Faust, Rayanne Humelsine, Ashley Jacobs, Jessica Piatt, Shelly Rotz, Bradley Shilling, Alison Van Horn
Charlottesville, Va.: James and Stacy Burback, Carl and Sandy Schwaner, Robert Ready
Defiance, Ohio: Morgan Hammon
Dupont, Ohio: Rebecca Hermiller, Earl Hermiller, Katie Kosch, Brian Kosch, Karen Kosch, Samantha Prowant, Norma Moore, Tony Tenwalde, Bonnie Adkins, Richard Adkins
Eversole, New Lebanon, Ohio: Scott Yuppa, Vivian Valley
First, Harrisburg, Pa.: Domique Burno, Lisbeth Carrion, Kathy Carrion, Mara Carrion, Gina Cruz, Millie Cruz, Jessica Cruz, Adriana Gonzalez, Hector Nieves, Mirta Ortiz, Hilda Rentas, Julio Reyes, Maria Rivera, Juanita Rosado, Ruth Ann Saft, Luz Salcedo, Yanitza Sobrado, Anderson Velez, Brenda Velez, Marisol Velez, Moises Velez, James Ballard, Juan Pablo Cruz, Mercedes Cruz, Margaret Morris, Andy Ostrowski, Ruth Ostrowski
Flat Creek, Big Creek, Ky.: Natasha Napier, Carrie Napier, Orville Napier, Edith Baker, Herschel Asher, Lena Asher
Friendship, Linthicum, Md.: George Forsythe
Glendale, Ariz.: Daniel Allen, Bob Borkiewicz, Beth Creaney, Gregg Gordon, Linda Gordon, Betty Jo Gordon, Linnette and Quinn Klinedinst, Sean McGuire, Cindy Yazzi
Greensburg, Pa.: Lori Blackburn, Linda Thompson
Hollidaysburg, Pa.: Allen Hughes, Gaylee Hughes, Patrick Hughes, Terry Bickel
Kent, Ohio: Millie and Richard Fox, Jason and Deena Smith, Justin Savarino
La Place, Ill.: Phil Hansen
Ligonier, Pa.: Katrina Beckman, Michael McInchok, Britney Pniewski, Zachary Polinsky
Linville Creek, Broadway, Va.: Norman Biller, Noah Keller, Jason Spence
Maple Spring, Hollsopple, Pa.: Adda Marian, Ashley Bittner, Jonathan Shaffer, Debbie Toth, Shawn Toth
Marsh Creek, Gettysburg, Pa.: Dennis Dawes, Lisa Dawes, Chrystal Baker, Fernando Rivera, Sheena Hay, Robert Hay III, Ashlee Musselman, Leighton McCleaf, Nicholas Troop, Roger Ramos, Tammy Nieves-Ramos
Middlebury, Ind.: Ron and Suezell Adams, Kimberly Barger, Lee and Dorothy Bontrager, Kevin and Donya Doutlick, Marilyn Kehr, Glen and Marie Kuhns, Don and LaVerda McGowen, Deneise Weymiller
Mill Creek, Tryon, N.C.: Al Brown, Reen Smith, Meghan Horne, Justin Horne, Claire Johnson, Jamie Kimbrell, Joshua McEntire, Ben McEntire, Melissa McEntire, Shanna McCormack, Megan Painter, Brandy Painter, Jane Plumley, Otis Rowe, Wilma Rowe, Joe Rinehart, Brenda Rinehart
Mohican, W. Salem, Ohio: Scott and Lee Ann Bowling, Rich Moore, Mike and Tracy Thomas, Jessica Wilcox, Cory Beegle
Moscow, Mt. Solon, Va.: Stacey Grove, Starr Hooke, Ryan Knott,Diana Reeves
Mt. Morris, Ill.: Vera Johansen, Michelle Bellows, Jan Francis, Isabelle Krol, Brian Ballard, Brandon Burr, Kristi Davis, Jessica Griffin, Ben Ritchey Martin, Kyle Ward
Mud Lick, Manchester, Ky.: Geneva Smallwood, Patsy Smallwood, Patricia Holland, Jennifer Holland, Oather Smith, Pamela Smallwood, Stephanie Holland
Naperville, Ill: Ivor and Saryu Hatia, Bhavna Patel, Purvi Satvedi, Christopher Shah, Vivek and Jenifer Shah, Nikhil Siony, Alliston Thakor
New Paris, Ind.: Randy Haupert, Renee Haupert, Beverly Long, Carla Valencourt, Angela Goppert
North Winona, Warsaw, Ind.: David Clay
Oakland, Gettysburg, Ohio: Ed Everman, Erin Everman, Eric Everman, Shari Everman, Mary Ann Maurer, Shelley Kontra, Pete Kontra, Rita Sharp, Peggy Stiver, Rick Stiver, Deborah Strain, Scott Strain, Don Wick, Ellen Wick, Richard Stiver, Stacie Stiver, Heidi Bailey, Joe Bailey, Paul Bailey, Wanda Bailey, Norma Baker, Susan Ganger, David Shetler, Lisa Martin, Wilma Heiby, Vicki Monnin, Stacey Galloway, Brian Haag, Kaysa McAdams, Patricia Meeks, Amy Hannahs, Don Harmon, Karla Harmon, Krista Spence, Tony Spence, Marianne Sigman, Dennis Sigman, Melissa Bernhard, Sarah Coblentz, Kathy Cooper, Christina Custer, Elizabeth Custer, Laura Donadio, Christopher Ernst, Elizabeth Etter, Jason Hollinger, Brandon Jeffries, Carrie Jones, Niki Lyme, Rebecca Hare, Melinda Thompson, Brad Hare, Marcia Shetler, Tracey Martin, Pat Monnin, Michael Galloway, Ray Haag, Lynne Hanes, Dennis Meeks, Linda Jones
Philadelphia First, Wyndmoor, Pa.: Tara H. Dorsett, H. Kevin Derr
Pine Grove, Harrisonburg, Va.: Mark Spitzer, Penny Green, Anne Brower, Don Adams, Glendon Deavers, Betty Ritchie, Luella See, Ray Caplinger, Connie Derrer, Nancy Adams, Dennis Stoneburner, James Eberly, Sam Good
Parker Ford, Pa.: Paul Weaver, Larry Willauer, Matthew Willauer, Ryan Willauer
Piney Creek, Taneytown, Md.: Dennis Robinson, Russell Tyler, Terry Bishop, Deborah Waltz, Kim Poff, Katie Baker, Richard and Linda Baumgardner, Tobias and Scott Bowers, Dale Dinterman, Linda Doxzon
Pleasant Hill, Johnstown, Pa.: Eric Blue, Elisa Cekada, Shawn Davis, Melissa Demchak, Nicholas Fabina, Sr., Jessica Leventry, Korey Roberts, Kurtis Roberts
Ridgely, Md.: Erma Lynn Garey, Althea Schuyler, Kathy Lindenberger
Saunders Grove, Moneta, Va.: Joanna Williams, Sheila Williams
Skyridge, Kalamazoo, Mich.: Ryan Metzler, Carie Moerdyk, Chuck Kreps-Long, David Thompson
South Bay Community, Redondo Beach, Calif.: Elizabeth Schatz, Shannon Jorgensen, Hannah McIntire, Shaun Jorgensen, Robert Schatz, Kevin Schatz
Stone, Huntingdon, Pa.: James Tuten, Belle Tuten, Andrew Nelson, Christopher Land, Aaron Rhodes, Joseph Porcelli
Trinity, Sidney, Ohio: Phillip Miller, Linda Miller, Rhonda Miller, Mark Barga, Lori Barga, Mark Chiles, Sue Chiles, and Thelma Slusser
Wichita, Kan.: Travis Boles, Susan Kendall, Mike Stapleton, Katie Hill, Aaron Melhorn, Christopher Minns, Chris Blurton
Wilmington, Del.: Jennifer Mary Burris, David Michael Cornelius, Brianna Leigh Hansen, Wesley Paul Haynes, Kathryn Micki McKenney, Amanda Shearer MacFarlane

Wedding anniversaries

Aldrich, Wallace and Pearl, North Liberty, Ind., 50
Bailey, Carol and Neva, Morrill, Kan., 50
Brandt, Lloyd and Lois, Glendora, Calif., 50
Brumbaugh, Elmer and Averie, Kent, Ohio, 75
Buirley, William and Pauline, Troy, Ohio, 50
Carper, Jerry and Eva, Richlandtown, Pa., 55
Catledge, Cecil and Bonnie, Gridley, Calif., 50
Folk, Glenn and Evelyn, South Bend, Ind., 50
Graffious, Howard and Maude, Defiance, Pa., 50
Hartsough, Raymond and Claire, Plymouth, Ind., 50
Haworth, Paul and Virginia, Lorida, Fla., 60
Hodge, Joe and Phyllis, La Place, Ill., 50
Hodgden, Ralph and Margaret, Erie, Kan., 60
Houser, George and Anna Lou, North Liberty, Ind., 60
Hunt, William and Cora Belle, Bushnell, Fla., 50
Kagarise, Blaire and Pauline, Huntingdon, Pa., 55
Leckron, Verl and Irene, Vancouver, Wash., 50
McCrory, Harold and Thelma, Olathe, Kan., 60

McNew, Robert and Genevieve, Chambersburg, Pa., 50
Miller, Henry and Mary, New Oxford, Pa., 73
Morral, Eugene and Allegra, Everett, Pa., 50
Pollock, Norman and Vivian, Ankeny, Iowa, 50
Reed, Roy and Esther, Plymouth, Ind., 50
Romick, Ray and Betty, Alleman, Iowa, 55
Rotruck, Dorsey and Mildred, McPherson, Kan., 65
Shively, Sherlo and Ila, Bakersfield, Calif., 50
Sloan, Don and Donna, Ashland, Ohio, 50
Underwood, Gilbert and Esther, Bassett, Va., 50
Wendell, Tobias and Georgia, Akron, Ohio, 50
Wildasin, Roy and Hilda, Hanover, Pa., 60
Young, Charles and Marilyn, Oakwood, Ohio, 50

Deaths

Adkins, James Alfred, 79, Bassett, Va., Nov. 2
Airey, Leta Elizabeth, 80, Dayton, Va., March 25
Apple, Ralph, Piqua, Ohio, April 23
Armentrout, Virginia, 94, Bridgewater, Va., April 27
Barker, Bonnie Nash, 50, Bassett, Va., Dec. 6
Barker, William Joseph, 52, Bassett, Va., Dec. 6
Boles, Buford G., 77, Modesto, Calif., May 1
Bowman, Mary, 85, Bridgewater, Va., April 13
Boyd, John, 89, Troy, Ohio, June 2
Brubaker, Martha Detrick, Troy, Ohio, May 8
Claar, Winifred, 85, Hollidaysburg, Pa., Jan. 31
Cline, Margaret I., 74, Waynesboro, Va., May 6
Cline, William L., 92, Harrisonburg, Va., May 15
Coy, Edward Cason, 87, Live Oak, Calif., April 6
Cullison, Bernice, 91, Gettysburg, Pa., Nov. 6
Delauter, Gladys Regina, Frederick, Md., April 25
Derringer, Byron I., 85, Grottoes, Va., April 15
Dickson, John, 82, Mt. Morris, Ill., Jan. 22
Donley, Esther, 83, Manheim, Pa., May 3
Dove, Burley F., 81, Broadway, Va., May 6
Dunmya, Tim, 46, Hooversville, Pa., April 26
Eash, Ruth, 87, Hooversville, Pa., April 20
Eby, Cecil, 78, Marysville, Ohio, Aug. 24
Fetter, Lawson, Greenville, Ohio, Feb. 13
Fiore, Isabel, 89, Greensburg, Pa., Jan. 1
Foley, Kate Midkiff, 89, Bassett, Va., Nov. 23
Foltz, Pearl, 79, Woodstock, Va., March 22
Foutz, Marcus, 82, Vinton, Va., Jan. 18
Gibbel, Verda E., 99, Palmyra, Pa., Feb. 27
Gibble, Ann E., 56, Chambersburg, Pa., May 10
Good, Evelyn H., 68, Grottoes, Va., May 8
Guy, Lantz L., 81, Timberville, Va., May 25
Hager, A. Mary, 94, Chambersburg, Pa., Jan. 16
Halterman, Inez L., 78, Bergton, Va., April 18
Hanger, Thelma K., 85, Harrisonburg, Va., May 5
Hatcher, William F., 82, McDowell, Va., April 5
Haulman, Ellen M., 84, Chambersburg, Pa., April 10
Henk, Carol, 72, Glendora, Calif., Dec. 21, 1997
Hershberger, Marion, 86, Kettering, Ohio, May 9
Hetrick, Ethel, 84, Huntingdon, Pa., Nov. 20
Hildebrandt, Philip, 86, York, Pa., May 8, 1999
Hoffer, Lulu, 93, Wakarusa, Ind., May 31
Holdren, Henry, 73, Moneta, Va., March 23
Holsopple, Donald, 74, Hollsopple, Pa., May 17
Houston, James A., 98, New Paris, Ind., March 18
Hudock, Alice Jane, 71, Greensburg, Pa., May 10
Johnston, Floyd, Monroeville, Pa., May 7
Keeling, Calvin, Bakersfield, Calif., Dec. 15
Ketterman, Charles W., 80, Petersburg, W.Va., April 11
Kielsmeier, 90, Mt. Morris, Ill., March 11
Kingree, Stanley, 71, Edinburg, Va., April 19
Kramer, Avanel, 76, Coopersburg, Pa., Feb. 23
Lauver, Wilbur H., 92, Ottawa, Kan., May 2
Layton, Fleeta, 91, Huntingdon, Pa., April 25, 1998
Lease, William, 84, Davidsville, Pa., April 30
Lemert, Henry, 85, Plymouth, Ind., May 13
Lough, Frances, 83, Broadway, Va., March 18
Lowes, Donnie, Monroeville, Pa., April 18
McElwee, Gladys, 94, Huntingdon, Pa., Feb. 11
Manchester, Alice, 92, Glendora, Calif., June 7, 1997
Martin, Vivian, 93, Mt. Morris, Ill., April 23
May, Larry T., 60, Lynchburg, Va., April 10
Mellott, Sara, Monroeville, Pa., April 13
Merriman, Edna Foley, 83, Bassett, Va., May 15, 1998
Metz, Pieter, 79, Kentucky, March, 1998
Meyers, Susan, 99, Chambersburg, Pa., Nov. 19
Miller, Frances, 81, Springfield, Mo., April 8
Miller, R. Eugene, 69, Saxton, Pa., March 15
Miller, Jerry D., 60, Harrisonburg, Va., March 3
Molison, Hazel N., 88, Hanover, Pa., April 9
Moore, Annie, 96, Ridgely, Md., Feb. 7
Morgan, Loretta, 73, Strasburg, Va., April 18
Mummert, Ross, 85, Chambersburg, Pa., Jan. 2
Norman, Luther A., Gettysburg, Pa., Nov. 13
Nusbaum, Alvin, 78, Middlebury, Ind., Nov. 30
Oakes, Albert J., Jr., 76, New Oxford, Pa., May 20
Personette, Roy, Mt. Morris, Ill., April 30
Pheasant-Pennington, Janelle, 29, Huntingdon, Pa., Aug. 4
Rager, Sylvester Dean, 73, Johnstown, Pa., March 9
Reeves, George Mack, 73, Bassett, Va., Aug. 5
Rhodes, Regina, 86, Hollidaysburg, Pa., Sept. 14
Rogers, Enid, 92, Wakarusa, Ind., April 2
Rose, Orrie L., 77, Johnstown, Pa., April 9
Rudy, Minnie, 90, Huntingdon, Pa., Aug. 29
Secrist, Seth F., 88, Fayetteville, Pa., Jan. 28
Shafer, Mildred, 86, Continental, Ohio, May 16
Shimp, Chelsie, Troy, Ohio, April 26
Smith, Mary H., 86, Harrisonburg, Va., May 10
Snead, Frances R., 80, Staunton, Va., May 9
Stauffer, Pearl, 80, Mt. Morris, Ill., April 19
Stephic, Frank, 73, Elkhart, Ind., Dec. 27
Stevens, Johnny, 82, Bedford, Va., March 27
Thompson, Leta, 83, Glendora, Calif., April 20
Turner, Wanda, 71, Fulks Run,Va., April 22
Webber, Martha E., 87, Modesto, Calif., May 2
Weyandt, James Sr., 53, New Stanton, Pa., April 2
Whittington, Emma, Baltimore, Md., May 17
Williams, Betty A., 77, York, Pa., May 1
Winebarger, Roger, 65, Bassett, Va., Dec. 19
Wright, Lois, 93, Bridgewater, Va., March 15
Wright, Roy, 97, Bridgewater, Va., March 9

Licensings

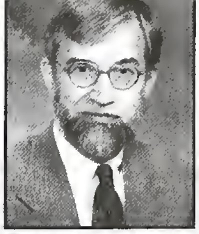
Brady, Stephen Derek, Mount Carmel, N.C., Dec. 12
Carter, Duane, Deepwater, Missouri/Arkansas, Feb. 13
Hoffman, Richard Allen, Schuykill, Pine Grove, Pa., Dec. 17
Rice, Larry Jr., Prince of Peace, South Bend, Ind., Sept. 8

Ordinations

Boyd, Mary L., Venice Community, Venice, Fla., Nov. 7
Stroup, Donald W., Lakeview, Brethren, Mich., May 1

Pastoral placement

Beutler, Kelly, to Liberty Mills, Ind.
Dowdy, Dale and Christy, from Antelope Park, Lincoln, Neb., to Stone, Huntingdon, Pa.
Driver, Brent, from Waynesboro, Pa., to Trinity, Sidney, Ohio
Dutka, Leon, from Bristol, Tenn., to Mountain Valley, Greeneville, Tenn.
Glover, Clara, from interim to Stover Memorial, Des Moines, Iowa
Kettering, Delbert, to East Chippewa, Orrville, Ohio
MacEachern, Warren, to Spring Mount, Mark, Pa.
McLearn-Montz, Alan, to Lower Deer Creek, Camden, Ind.
Pyles, Ty, to Pitsburg, Arcanum, Ohio
Spangler, Keith, from New Haven, Sparta, N.C., to Boones Chapel, Snow Creek, Va.
Upham, James Daryl, from another denomination to Pleasnt Dale, Decatur, Ind.
Vroon, Robert, from West Shore, Enola, Pa., to Hempfield, E. Petersburg, Pa.



Editorial

A new name for a new time

I've been experimenting with changing my name. All my life I have been called Bud, while I have reserved my real name, Fletcher, for my byline and signature. Fletcher was my father's name, and I was Fletcher, Jr. He's been gone a few years now, and I've started claiming Fletcher as my own, actually having people call me that. It's been gradual and hesitant to be sure. Friends must surely think I'm strange when I call myself one name one time and something different the next. But I feel something inside moving me toward Fletcher. I've entered a new phase of my life, started a new job, and turned 50. I'm ready to get strong and serious for the long haul. I can shape the meaning of Fletcher, and the name can shape me. I'm ready for a new name.

"A name is a precious part of our identity," said Donna Ritchey Martin when she addressed Standing Committee in 1992. She reflected on her own name changes, from her childhood name, to her married name, to "Mommy." "Each of those names has reflected who I am at a given time of life and what my relationships are," she said. "A name reflects both identity and relationship."

> *A name is a precious part of our identity. A name reflects both identity and relationship.*

Ritchey Martin made these remarks as a member of a "pre-committee"study committee that did groundbreaking work on the issue of a new name for the Church of the Brethren. But after Standing Committee received the pre-committee's report in 1993, it essentially dropped the matter, albeit "with the knowledge that the discussion will continue." In the past six years there hasn't been much discussion. But now Womaen's Caucus has taken the lead in reviving it by devoting a recent edition of its newsletter, "Femailings," to the name issue. Noting that the issue had been swept under the rug, "Femailings" editor Carissa Fralin writes, "After much discussion and prayer, the [Womaen's Caucus] Steering Committee has decided to lift up the rug. Let me make clear, however, that we cannot do this alone. It will be a short-lived project if we find no support."

Here's some support. A new name could be a positive and attractive identity tool that describes both who we are and who we want to be. Jay Gibble, the former director of the Association of Brethren Caregivers, has given the matter considerable thought. "A good name should say where we've been. What are the concepts that have defined us as a people?" He proposes "peace" as a defining concept for our church. And he proposes "covenant," which he says captures the idea that we are a "community of the book." "We covenant to live in peace, to follow the way of peace." His proposal: Covenant Peace Church.

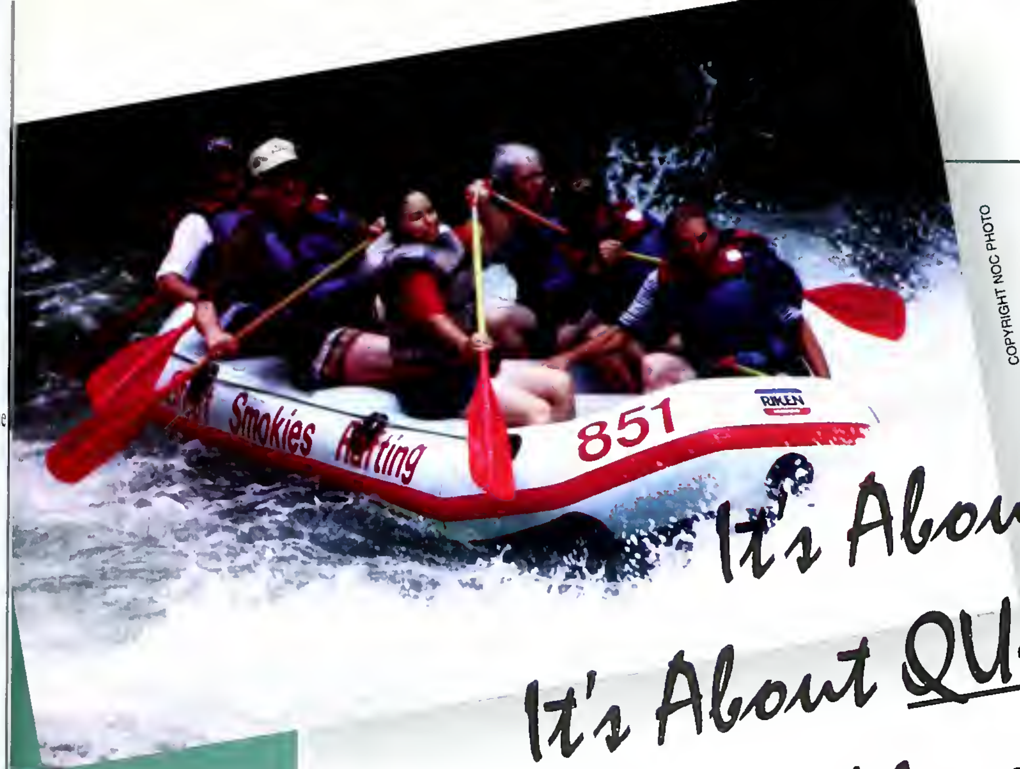
"The name works at mission," Gibble says. "It says what we're about. Peacemaking is something we can do and do well. Those who are interested in peace will join us. In a society of violence, what is more needed?"

We have grown fond of telling people who we are by repeating the lines, "Continuing the work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together." Wouldn't it be nice if the name of the church also helped to tell our story?

Church of the Brethren has a proud history, and nothing is going to erase that. But it is important to understand that that name did not come up out of the water with the "five brethren and three sisters" who were baptized in 1708. In fact this group's spiritual descendants didn't even have an official name until they adopted "Fraternity of German Baptists" in 1836. That became "German Baptist Brethren" in 1871, but by the turn of the century the name no longer included everyone—not all were German. And the name confused outsiders because, although most services were not conducted in German, the name implied that they were. As Brother T. T. Myers said at the 1905 Annual Meeting: "I have no prejudice against the name German Baptist Brethren, but it is a name that we cannot use. We cannot use it in city work. We cannot use it in mission work. What we would like is a name we can universally use all around."

In 1905 the *Gospel Messenger* invited members to write in their opinions on a name change, and a vigorous discussion ensued. In 1908, the church's bicentennial year, Annual Conference adopted the name "Church of the Brethren" by a vote of 289 to 103. Not all were pleased, of course. Albert C. Wieand, of Bethany Bible School in Chicago, wrote in the *Gospel Messenger* in 1908: "*Brethren* is masculine, and a body of our sisters cannot say,—if a group of other ladies should say to them, 'We are Presbyterians, what are you?'— 'We are Brethren,' because the humor of the situation would be too much."

After nearly a hundred years, the humor is wearing thin. Our church should work to have a new name by the 300th anniversary in 2008—a name that not only doesn't offend, but one that invites others and challenges our own.—FLETCHER FARRAR



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In January, 11 McPherson College students, one alumnus, one faculty member, and one staff member left the comforts of campus to serve the community of Tarana in the Dominican Republic. While there, the crew built latrines, roofed houses, helped repair damage to the town's windmill-driven water system, made about a million new friends, and learned more about themselves than they *ever* expected . . . and this was just one of the many opportunities for service and learning at McPherson this year!

Photo (top): Members of the McPherson College work team teach the children of Tarana to play Duck, Duck, Goose.

Photo (middle): Renata Lichty of Quinter, Kan., takes a break from digging latrines to meet some new friends.

Photo (right): Seth Good of Annville, Pa., negotiates rafters while roofing a home in Tarana.

To find out more about how *you* can become a member of the McPherson College community, call 1-800-365-7402.

Church of the Brethren August 1999 www.brethren.org

Messenger

Page
Ho Ping
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Leadership in Milwaukee

Annual Conference 1999

One out of seven of the world's people is hungry.

Viviane Moos©

Do something about it.

In southern Sudan, the Global Food Crisis Fund provides development aid and literacy training. In the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua, food relief. In Honduras, a hydroponic project among the poor. In India, agricultural and health extension in rural villages. In Belize, literacy training. In North Korea, 100 high quality goats. In Guatemala, wood-conserving stoves and water-storing cisterns. In Grand Junction, Colo., welfare-to-work assistance. In Harrisburg, Pa., community development.

These are places and people currently being served by the Global Food Crisis Fund. Join in this ministry of Christian compassion and hope by sending your gift to the Global Food Crisis Fund, Church of the Brethren General Board, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120 (800 323-8039; witness_gb@brethren.org).

Give 'til it helps.

Global Food Crisis Fund

Messenger

Vol. 148, No. 7 August 1999 www.brethren.org

Editor: Fletcher Farrar
News: Nevin Dulabaum
Subscriptions: Vicki Roche
Publisher: Wendy McFadden
Designer: Marianne Sackett

On the cover: The cover photo for this year's Annual Conference issue is of the children of the Covenant Chorale, directed by Karen Cakerice, from the Ivester Church of the Brethren, Grundy Center, Iowa, performing an early evening concert in Milwaukee. For each verse of their song about peace they sang "peace" in a different language, and a child would hold up a sign with that word on it.

The photo is by Regina Bryan, official photographer of this year's Annual Conference, who took most of the photos we use with our coverage on pages 10-22. Regina lives on a farm near Decatur, Ind., with her husband, Nat Bryan, and operates a freelance photography business out of her home. They are members of the Pleasant Dale Church of the Brethren. She grew up in the Midland, Va., congregation, where her pastor when she was a teenager was David Radcliff, an accomplished photographer and now director of Brethren Witness. "I was impressed by the way he used his photography skills to beautifully portray those in poverty with dignity, and share their sense of hope and joy in spite of their circumstances." So influenced, she studied photography in high school and at Shepherd College in Shepherdstown, W.Va., and used her camera skills during her two-year Brethren Volunteer Service stint working with SERRV. She says it is part of her life's dream to work as a photographer for the Church of the Brethren, taking photos that "make a difference." She adds: "I always loved the family reunion feel of Annual Conference and hoped I could bring that feeling across through my photographs to those who weren't able to attend."

Features

10 1999 Annual Conference

Coverage of the Milwaukee Annual Conference includes news of business and elections, compiled by Brethren Press News Service Director Nevin Dulabaum and his Conference team of writers named on page 10. In addition, we feature special articles on other Conference subjects. Erin Matteson wrote on spirituality workshops (p. 16), Kurt Borgmann on worship at Conference (p. 18), Walt Wiltschek on children's activities (p. 20), and Frank Ramirez on renewal at the Logansport (Ind.) Chuch of the Brethren (p. 22).

23 A disastrous six months

When Bob and Marianne Pittman agreed to serve as interim co-managers of Emergency Response/ Service Ministries beginning last January, they had no idea it would be one of the busiest periods of the disaster agency's history. Yet they not only survived, but thrived, and meanwhile helped one of their co-workers through a personal disaster of her own.

26 The god called materialism

A thought-provoking article by David Radcliff, Brethren Witness director, examines the damaging effects of human overconsumption on the earth's ability to sustain itself, and concludes with helpful suggestions for ways to repent from dependence on material things.

Departments

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32 Editorial

From the Publisher

The best thing about the Great Lakes Song & Story Fest was where the songs and stories came from—that is, deep out of people's own lives.

The week in July at Camp Mack in Indiana was rich with experience. I was particularly moved by the informal storytelling that took place during one of the workshops. A collection of ordinary objects (symbolic of the typical attic) was laid out on a bench. When a memory was evoked by one of the objects, the person rose to tell the story. None were trained storytellers, but the words shared were eloquent testimonies about receiving legacies, about adopting and being adopted, about dying and living.

Each person's story was received with warm applause, offered with a spirit of gratitude for the risk taken. Once there was no applause, because the story shared was too tender, too poignant, to respond in any way but silence.

We rarely have the opportunity to interact this profoundly with other people, even the ones we know well. But the Song & Story Fest showed that the stories are there, in everyone, if we can only establish a place and an invitation for them to be told. We can all be enriched if we recognize our own stories, waiting to be discovered, and if in turn we can provide the places and the invitations for others to tell theirs.

A few years ago I mined my own memory to produce the gifts that I am perhaps most proud of—a set of two handmade books. When each of my parents turned 80, I created a book called I Remember. Each of the 60 or so pages had a simple one- or two-sentence memory recalled from my childhood. For the first book I recalled experiences I'd had with my mother. The next year I recalled experiences I'd had with my father. The books cost me only a modest amount in supplies, but represented the best gifts that I could give.

Since these collections of sparely written prose are presented so simply, without comment, the meaning they carry must be in the act of remembering—in the remembrances themselves. Remembering something gives it importance, even power. Someone (unfortunately, I've forgotten who) has said, "No experience is complete until it is remembered."

Perhaps this is some of what happens at Annual Conference and at other places Brethren gather. When we rekindle acquaintances and search for common memories, we honor each other. In a time when so much is out-of-date as soon as it's produced, giving each other the stories of our lives is an activity to cherish.

Wendy McFadden

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MESSENGER is now available on the World Wide Web at www.brethren.org/genbd/messengr/index.htm

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Printed on recycled paper

Littleton, Colo. church swaps violence for peace

Swapping violent video and computer games for family-friendly board games was a simple idea that evoked a surprising response for the Prince of Peace Church in Littleton, Colo., and led to greater things.

A small study group came up with the idea in mid-May while talking about how the church might help the community bring peace out of the tragedy at Columbine High School. Pastor Sarah Leatherman Young says, "Since it's been acknowledged how fond the killers at Columbine were of playing 'Doom' and similar games, many families are rethinking this form of entertainment. The game swap was a way to get rid of the violent games while encouraging more family group entertainment and interaction."

Two days later, Pastor Young called the office of Lt. Col. Dave Grossman, a person she had met in a training experience two years ago and someone she knew could powerfully address the issue. She was told he was booked into the year 2000, and she was about to hang up when she was put on hold for another caller. It was Grossman calling in from the Senate hearing where he was testifying on just this issue. The office manager mentioned to him who was on the other line and why, and when she came back on Young's line, she said the colonel would come and waive his fee! A date was set—Saturday, June 12.

Connect Four
HUNGRY HUNGRY HIPPOS
SORRY!
PARCHEES

t. Col. Dave Grossman *xplains the need to swap iolent video games for amily-oriented board games, lonated by a major game ompany.*

Young said for the next three weeks the church office looked like "a pressroom, with mailings, releases, e-mails, and faxes flying." Quickly the pieces came together. Hasbro sent 300 board games to be swapped. The Brethren Witness office gave a grant to cover expenses; a clergy colleague of Young's secured the community college for the event. Author Jim McGinnis sent 100 copies of *Creating Family Circles of Peace* for those who would sign the Family Pledge of Non-Violence. Grossman, a licensed Southern Baptist minister, was scheduled to speak at two events on Saturday and from the pulpit on Sunday. As the day neared, the media began to take notice.

The actual swap was a bit disappointing. Young was surprised at the small number of kids who were really willing to give up their games. Grossman thinks the adrenalin rush and pleasure the kids get from the violent games makes them addictive. Young sees a huge educational task ahead.

But the swap was only the beginning. "Television and radio stations have reported on it without further prompting from us," says Young, "and people from all over metro Denver are giving words of encouragement and offering to help. *USA Today* ran a picture along with an article on Grossman. And we even made the General Board Live Report at this year's Annual Conference."

Building on all this interest and concern, the congregation created a follow-up workshop—this time for younger children. Teenagers are being helped to work through the tragedy. Young thinks small children in the area need help too.

Called "Helping Young Children Cope," the back-to-school workshop was held on Saturday, Aug. 14, and was jointly sponsored by the Prince of Peace congregation, a local group called The Conflict Center, teaching conflict and anger management and parenting skills, and the Disaster Child Care Program of the Church of the Brethren Emergency Reponse/Service Ministries. The leader was Judy Gump, a disaster child care trainer, and member of the Littleton congregation.

The game swap idea grew like a mustard seed, says Young. "It's been an amazing blessing to watch this mustard seed idea blossom into a grassroots movement."—James H. Lehman

Berneita and Don Smucker at New Windsor in 1951 . . . and today.

Couple completes a BVS Circle of Service

Don and Berneita Smucker, members of the older adult BVS Unit 233, trained at the Brethren Service Center in May. This was not their first trip to New Windsor, Md. but it brought back some very special memories for both of them. They became engaged here in January 1951, while Berneita was training as a member of BVS Unit 9. Don Smucker had met Berneita the previous August in Middlebury, Ind., and while stationed in Arlington, Va,. he took the opportunity to visit and pop the question.

Following her BVS training, Berneita worked in Washington, D.C., for the National Service Board for Religious Objectors, finishing up her assignment in early December. She and Don were married December 29, 1951. In 1974, Berneita's parents joined an over-30 BVS group and after visiting New Windsor again, Don and Berneita began to think about BVS service after they retired. Attending Annual Conference last year reawakened their interest and following up on information in Messenger, they signed up for BVS.

So in 1999, 48 years later, they were back in New Windsor. Coming full circle as a BVSer in 1951, operating a successful business and retiring, Don and Berneita are continuing to serve others. —Kathleen Campanella

Churches celebrate golden birthdays

Piney Creek Church of the Brethren, Taneytown, Md., has aunnounced its centennial celebration plans for Sept. 18 and 19.

Four services are planned. Saturday evening, Sept. 18, Piney Creek Players will perform. Sunday at 9 a.m. will be a children's program, followed by morning worship at 10:15. John Layman will be the guest speaker, and former pastors will participate. A 2 p.m. service will feature talks on the past, present, and future of the church.

Nampa (Idaho) Church of the Brethren has been celebrating its centennial with special events each month, to culminate in a final celebration with a birthday dinner Nov. 13 and 14.

In honor of the Nampa centennial a cookbok with both old and new recipes has been prepared by the women of the church. A souvenir plate is available and a history book is being published.

Sharpsburg (Md.) Church of the Brethren celebrated its 100th anniversary in its present location in April. There was an open house and a special worship service featuring Fred Bernhard, a former pastor of the congregation. Before the "new" church was occupied in 1899, the congregation worshiped at the famous "Old Dunkard Church" on the Antietam battlefield, built in 1852.

Midland (Mich.) Church of the Brethren celebrates its 75th anniversary on Sept. 26 with a special worship service, a luncheon, and an afternoon program. More information is available on Midland's Web page at HTTP://members.xoom.com/MidlandCoB/.

Youth meating: *In April there were 27 volunteers, many of them youth, from the Pleasant Hill Church of the Brethren, Spring Grove, Pa., helping to process beef at the Southern PA/Mid-Atlantic District meat canning project. Pictured above, from left, are Tanya Miller, Rachel Miller, Katie Churchfield, Angela Newcomer, and Janice Godfrey. The project yielded 27,495 cans of meat, which was donated to Church World Service, Southern Pennsylvania District, Mid-Atlantic District, Emergency Response/Service Ministries, and Christian Aid Ministries.*—Priscilla A. Martin

Daily News-Record, Harrisonburg, Va

Importing his spirit *from Ghana to Virginia, Arnold Adjetey pumps up his team.*

Church sends soccer ambassador to Europe

When the Dayton (Va.) Church of the Brethren learned that one of its own had a chance to represent the state of Virginia on the American Soccer Ambassadors tour of Europe, they went to work to help. With contributions mostly from church members, they raised the $5,000 necessary. So Arnold Adjetey, a soccer standout at Harrisonburg (Va.) High School, left July 24 on a summer tour to train and play soccer in England, Belgium, Holland, and Germany.

Adjetey was recently featured in the local *Daily News-Record* as the district's top player and his team's leading scorer in his junior year.

Four years ago Adjetey moved with his family from Ghana to Harrisonburg. His father works at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg and his sister is a student there; the whole family is active in the Church of the Brethren. "Arnold brings a lot of his culture to us," his coach told the newspaper. "He pumps up the team with it."

He scored five goals in a single game this past season, and hopes to play college soccer. Besides all that, says his pastor, Peter Leddy, Sr., "he is a delightful young man."

Remembered

Paul M. Weaver, 81, of North Manchester, Ind., died July 2. He served the General Board as director of junior highs and camping in the 1950s and as principal of Hillcrest School in Nigeria in the 1960s. Upon return from Nigeria he was principal of Gifford School in Elgin, Ill., from 1967 to 1984.

• **Raymond Stayer,** of Denver, Pa., former short-term missionary for the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria from 1966–1969, died July 18, 1999, at the age of 94.

• **R. Eugene Miller,** 69, of Saxton, Pa., died March 15. As a Church of the Brethren pastor he served many congregations, including long tenures at Raven Run congregation near Saxton, and the Carson Valley congregation near Duncansville. At the time of his death he was interim pastor of the Dunnings Creek congregation, New Paris, Pa. He had served on numerous boards and committees at district and denominational levels.

"In Touch" features news of congregations, districts, and individuals. Send story ideas and photos to "In Touch," Messenger, *1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120.*

News

Nevin Dulabaum

General Board members meeting in Milwaukee, including a perplexed David R. Miller, of Roanoke, Va., grappled with numerous issues, including a proposal for new support for a ministry in Tijuana, Mexico.

"J2K - New Hope, New Day" General Board initiatives for the year 2000

The General Board will challenge Brethren to celebrate the beginning of the new millennium with a host of activities that range from tree-planting to prayer to church planting.

Meeting in Milwaukee before Annual Conference, Board members tentatively adopted the theme "J2K-New Hope, New Day" and laid out its agenda. J is for Jesus.

A monthly prayer/meditation calendar will include daily scriptures and encourage Brethren to read an annual goal of 200, 2,000, or 20,000 Bible verses.

Special worship and leadership resources will be developed for the beginning and ending of the year.

A theological conference will be held in conjunction with Bethany Theological Seminary.

Congregations, families, and even individuals will be encouraged to create time capsules to be opened in 2033.

Brethren will plant 2,000 trees across the denomination symbolizing hope for the future.

To prepare for a "new day of peace in the new millennium," congregations will be encouraged to hold worship services that focus on peace, to host cross-cultural events, and to call volunteers for workcamps or Brethren Volunteer Service.

A special booth will be created at Annual Conference to celebrate the millennium.

Fifty thousand Brethren will be challenged to set aside 20 cents each Sunday to raise $500,000 for the following: 1) to fund three years of ministerial training for men and women from the Dominican Republic; 2) to help create a safe-haven community center in East Los Angeles, Calif., 3) to enable people in developing countries to construct wood-conserving stoves; 4) to assist in making low-income loans to the poor; 5) to help plant congregations in the US and Puerto Rico and help existing congregations grow; and 6) to work with congregations, districts and community agencies to help homeless families find shelter.

In other actions, the Board voted to explore a partnership with Campaneros en Ministerio (Partners in Ministry) of Tijuana, Mexico, an independent ministry that has received strong support through congregations and districts and the General Board's Youth/Young Adult Ministry office.

This was the first recommendation from the Board's Mission and Ministries Planning Council, which was created during the Board's 1997 redesign. The next step is to clarify what each side will expect of the other. The Board voted to review the partnership (if formalized) after two years.

Three Brethren at Michigan Global Warming Conference

Three members of the Church of the Brethren were among the 70 participants representing 19 faith communities and at least four state ecumenical organizations assembled near Lansing, Mich. for "Global Warming and God's People: The Michigan Interfaith Global Warming Conference," June 14-15. They were Marie Willoughby of Copemish, Don Flint of Sterling Heights, and Jane Reynor of Vestaburg.

This event was part of a year-long campaign designed to to help people of faith in nine selected states across the United States to see global warming as a religious issue.

Peacemaker Teams plan trips to Middle East

The Christian Peacemaker Teams staff has scheduled trips to the Middle East for Nov. 18-30 and Feb. 4-16.

Rebuilders Against Bulldozers Teams will meet with Israeli and Palestinian peace and human rights workers and then join with CPT's long-term team in Hebron to document cases of Palestinian families whose homes are threatened with demolition by Israeli authorities.

Trips to Chiapas, Mexico are scheduled for Nov. 4-15 and Feb. 18-29. Delegates will learn about justice issues underlying the conflict in this southern Mexican state and meet with villagers facing ongoing violence and harassment from soldiers and paramilitary groups.

Tornado disaster relief in own back yard

When Gordon Hoffert, pastor of Lewiston (Minn.) Church of the Brethren decided to lead an upcoming delegation from his church to participate in tornado relief response in Haysville, Kan., little did he know that such an opportunity would soon exist in the church's backyard.

On a weekend in July, a tornado passed less than a mile north of the church, striking a vacant farm and a residential area in Lewiston and causing about $1.8 million in damage. Although 15 homes were damaged beyond repair, there were no casualties.

Since the tornado did not devastate the town and affect as large a portion of its citizens as the May 3 tornado that blasted through Haysville, most of the cleanup was finished in two days by local volunteers, including Church of the Brethren members.

However, Hoffert learned that only about half of the damaged houses were covered by insurance. Volunteer labor and grants will be sought to make up the remaining $900,000.

Hoffert still plans to take to take a work crew of about six to Haysville in late August to assist in a General Board Emergency Response/Service Ministries (ER/SM) rebuilding project, but he is also preparing for his congregation to assist those in need in Lewiston.

Long-term disaster relief for Haysville, Kansas

The General Board's ER/SM is opening a new project to offer long-term relief in Haysville, Kan. A group from Southern Pennsylvania District began in the first week of August. Wilbur and Nancy Morris of Stanardsville, Va. are serving as project coordinators, assisted by Adrian Sayler of St. John, Kan., all of whom arrived on site on July 25.

The May 3 Kansas tornadoes destroyed 8,500 houses, including many in Haysville.

ABC, General Board team up for intergenerational camp

At the end of July, 14 youth and 10 older adults repaired homes and maintained properties in Harrisburg, Pa., for the Brethren Housing Authority, a downtown urban housing and ministry project.

The was the first collaboration between the Association of Brethren Caregivers and the General Board's Youth/Young Adult Ministries office.

New BVS unit begins training in New Windsor

Brethren Volunteer Service unit 234 kicked-off orientation on July 18th at New Windsor (Md.) Conference Center. Twenty-one volunteers from

11 states, Germany, and Japan participated. Half the volunteers were from the Church of the Brethren. Eight other religious organizations were represented.

For the first time in many years a volunteer came from Japan. This was made possible through Brethren connections with the World Friendship Center in Hiroshima.

GFC Fund allocation includes tractor purchase in India

A $51,000 Global Food Crisis Fund grant has been allocated for the Rural Service Center in India. The agency assists poor people by providing basic agricultural services. The funds will support the general program and help buy a tractor. The allocation will be given over a three-year period.

Approval for $27,000 was given for the 1999 portion of the request, including $12,000 for program and $15,000 for the tractor purchase.

China mission exhibit opens at Bridgewater College

An exhibit on Brethren missionaries in China is now on display at the Alexander Mack Memorial Library at Bridgewater (Va.) College. It includes artifacts, photographs, and other memorabilia from the work of 94 Brethren missionaries, 20 of whom were Bridgewater graduates. These missionaries served in China from 1908 through 1950, during the period of war and famine that lead up to and through that country's communist revolution.

The late Ernest Wampler, who was a former missionary, his children (all Bridgewater graduates), and a handful of other former missionary children helped create this exhibit. It is free-of-charge and will be open during August from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.

The National Youth Cabinet *takes a break from its meetings at the General Offices on July 24-25 to pose in the tukel created for the General Board exhibit at Annual Conference. Left to right, front: Emily Tyler, McPherson, Kan.; Marie Rhoades, Harrisburg, Pa.; Jill Noffsinger, Elkhart, Ind.; Steve Van Houten, Akron, Ohio. Left to right, back: Eric Christiansen, Franklin Grove, Ill.; Chris Douglas, Elgin, Ill.; Drew Jones, Durham, NC.*

Staff changes

William Thomas on June 10 joined Brethren Benefit Trust as controller. Thomas, who has his Ph.D. in business administration, has spent much of his career teaching accounting at colleges and universities. He also served as financial controller for the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea.

Mark Flory Steury has been called to serve as executive of Southern Ohio District beginning Oct. 1. Mark has served as pastor of Mack Memorial Church of the Brethren, Dayton, Ohio, since 1993. Previously he served as co-pastor with his wife, Mary Jo, at Troy (Ohio) Church of the Brethren. Flory Steury is a graduate of Manchester College, North Manchester, Ind., and has a masters of divinity degree from Bethany Theological Seminary, Richmond, Ind.

Jim Yaussy Albright has been called as executive of the Illinois/Wisconsin District beginning Sept. 13. He currently is serving the Huntington and Markle congregations in the South/Central Indiana District. In addition to his pastoral experience, Yaussy Albright has had extensive training in conflict resolution in congregational settings. He also co-founded and co-directed the Fort Wayne (Ind.) Mediation Service beginning in 1986. Yaussy Albright is a graduate of Manchester College, North Manchester, Ind., and has a master of divinity degree from Bethany Theological Seminary, Richmond, Ind.

Russ Matteson has been called as marketing manager for Brethren Press, beginning July 19. Matteson was general manager of Borders Books and Music in Wheaton, Ill. Previously Matteson and his wife, Erin, co-pastored Fellowship in Christ Fremont (Calif.) Church of the Brethren. Erin currently pastors Faith Church of the Brethren in Batavia, Ill. Matteson holds a bachelor of arts in economics from Grinnell (Iowa) College and a master of divinity degree in peace studies from Bethany Theological Seminary.

Jon Kobel began serving as manager of office operations for the General Board's executive director's office on June 21. Kobel has a bachelor of fine arts degree from Judson College, Elgin, Ill. Previously he worked for several hotels and held various positions at David C. Cook Publishing in Elgin.

Barb Leininger Dickason of Mt. Airy, Md., began serving as On Earth Peace Assembly's program coordinator in mid-June. She succeeded Audrey Osborne. Dickason recently relocated to Maryland from Syracuse, N.Y., where she was working on a master's degree. She is a graduate of Manchester College, North Manchester, Ind.

Mike Leiter has been hired as On Earth Peace Assembly's coordinator of communications and funding, beginning in August. Previously Leiter has worked for Manchester College, North Manchester, Ind., for the General Board, and a Brethren retirement home.

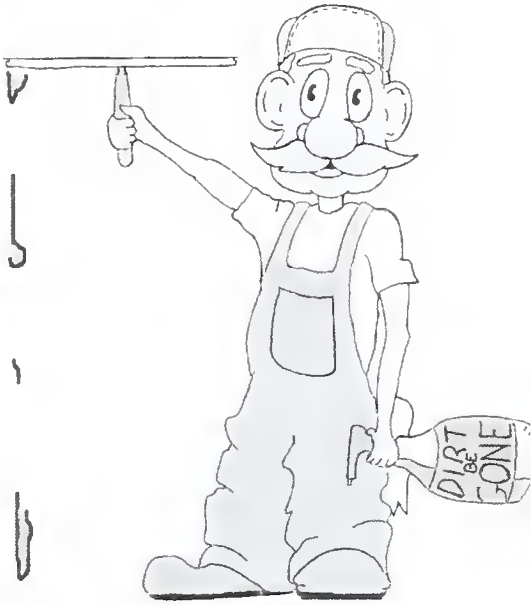
BBT chooses Burt the window cleaner as Web guide

Ted Kaetzel, *winner of BBT contest.*

With his creation, Burt the window cleaner, Ted Kaetzel, age 17, of Knoxville, Md., won the contest sponsored by Brethren Benefit Trust to choose an icon for the filtered search engine of its ClearViewNet Internet Service.

Burt "will provide a friendly and helpful companion to those surfing the Net," Kaetzel said. The character wields a "Dirt Be Gone" cleaner and squeegee to clean up the Internet for those using ClearViewSearch, which filters out pornography, violence, sex, cheating, drugs, and alcohol.

Kaetzel received a new computer and a year's subscription to ClearViewNet. Nearly 40 Brethren from throughout the denomination participated in the contest.



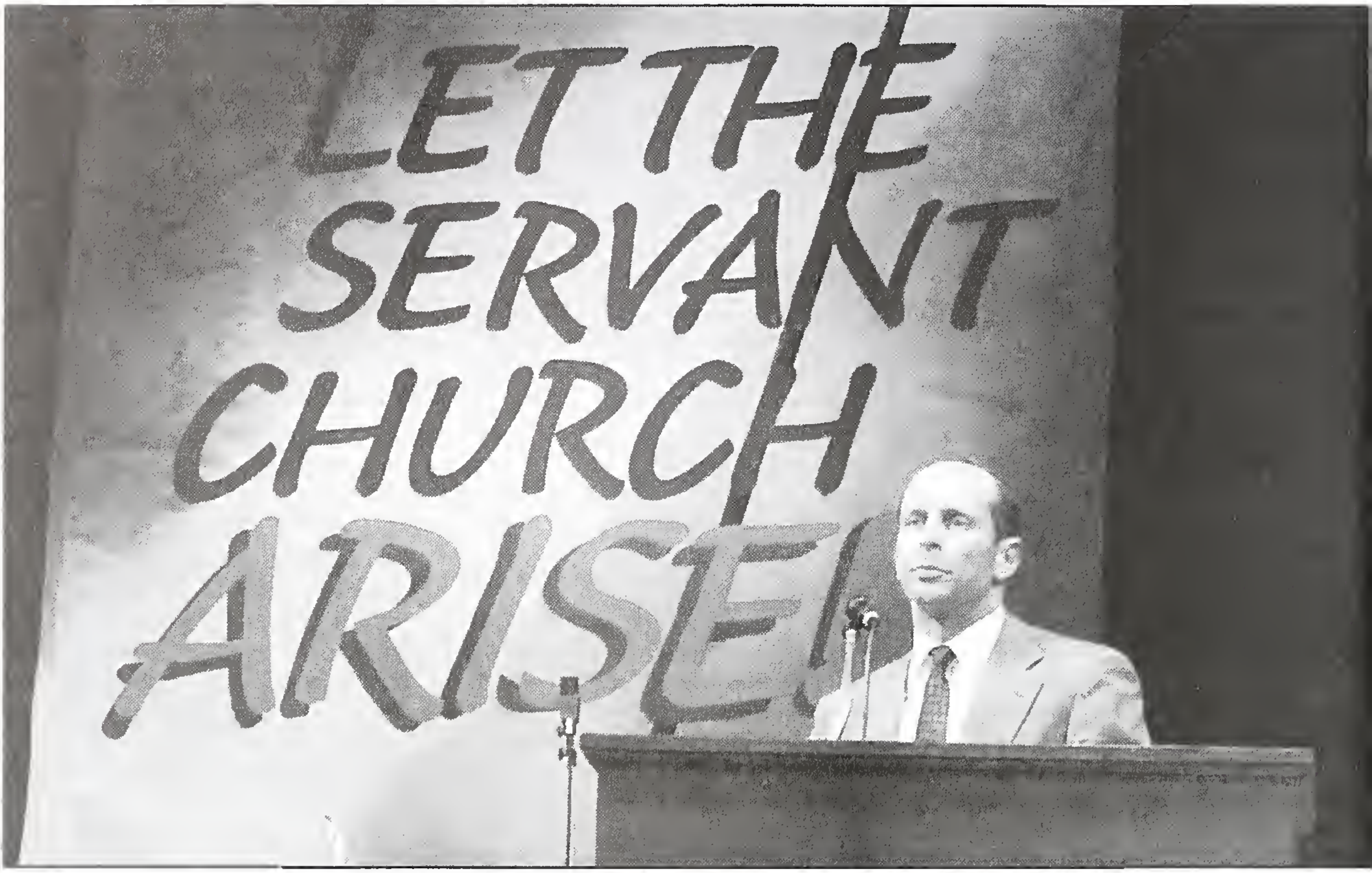
Burt the Window Cleaner, *the winning design for the BBT web guide.*

Deborah Morris, *Charlottesville, Va., finished first among female runners in the 1st Annual BBT Run/Walk Fitness Challenge at Annual Conference.*

Becky Ball Miller, *director of Camp Mack, Milford, Ind., finished first among all walkers.*

Milwaukee '99

Exploring what it means to be a servant church


LET THE SERVANT CHURCH ARISE!

Regina Bryan

A strong statement *on children and violence, which called for more effective gun control legislation, was presented to delegates by Brethren Witness director David Radcliff.*

About the articles

Reports on Annual Conference business and elections were compiled by the Brethren Press News Service team, headed by Nevin Dulabaum, editor, and including Karla Hignite, Regina Bryan, Walt Wiltschek, Kathleen Campanella, and Nathan Davis.

"Let the Servant Church Arise," the 213th Annual Conference theme, got a workout in Milwaukee June 29-July 4. It showed up in banners and logos everywhere and inspired the message of sermons and insight sessions on servant leadership.

And the hymn from which the line was taken was put to thrilling new music by Richard D. Brode, of the Chicago First church, commissioned specifically for Annual Conference. When trumpets and trombones added their power to the thousands of conference voices, the message was triumphant:

Then let the servant church arise,
a caring church that longs to be
a partner in Christ's sacrifice,
and clothed with Christ's humanity.

Regina Bryan

Several youth members, *including Wendy Matheny, of Peoria, Ill., implored the church to take a stand against gun violence.*

Regina Bryan

Delegates approved the paper *by a wide margin though there was some opposition.*

Leadership tops AC business

The theme carried over into business sessions dominated by discussions of how to call, train, and equip leaders for the church.

Drawing from writings and discussion that spanned nearly a decade, delegates approved a Ministerial Leadership Statement that contains "polity and procedures for the licensed and ordained ministry, calling to and advancement within the ministry, and receiving ordained ministers from other denominations."

This paper also includes revisions of previous Conference actions. It is the result of expansive studies and feedback received over the years, and from visits over the past year to all 23 district ministry commissions by the General Board's Ministry staff, and from input received from the Ministry office's Web site.

Delegates adopted the statement after approving several clarifying amendments.

"This statement establishes a far clearer set of guidelines and moves us toward consistency from district to district," said moderator Lowell Flory following the vote.

Regina Bryan

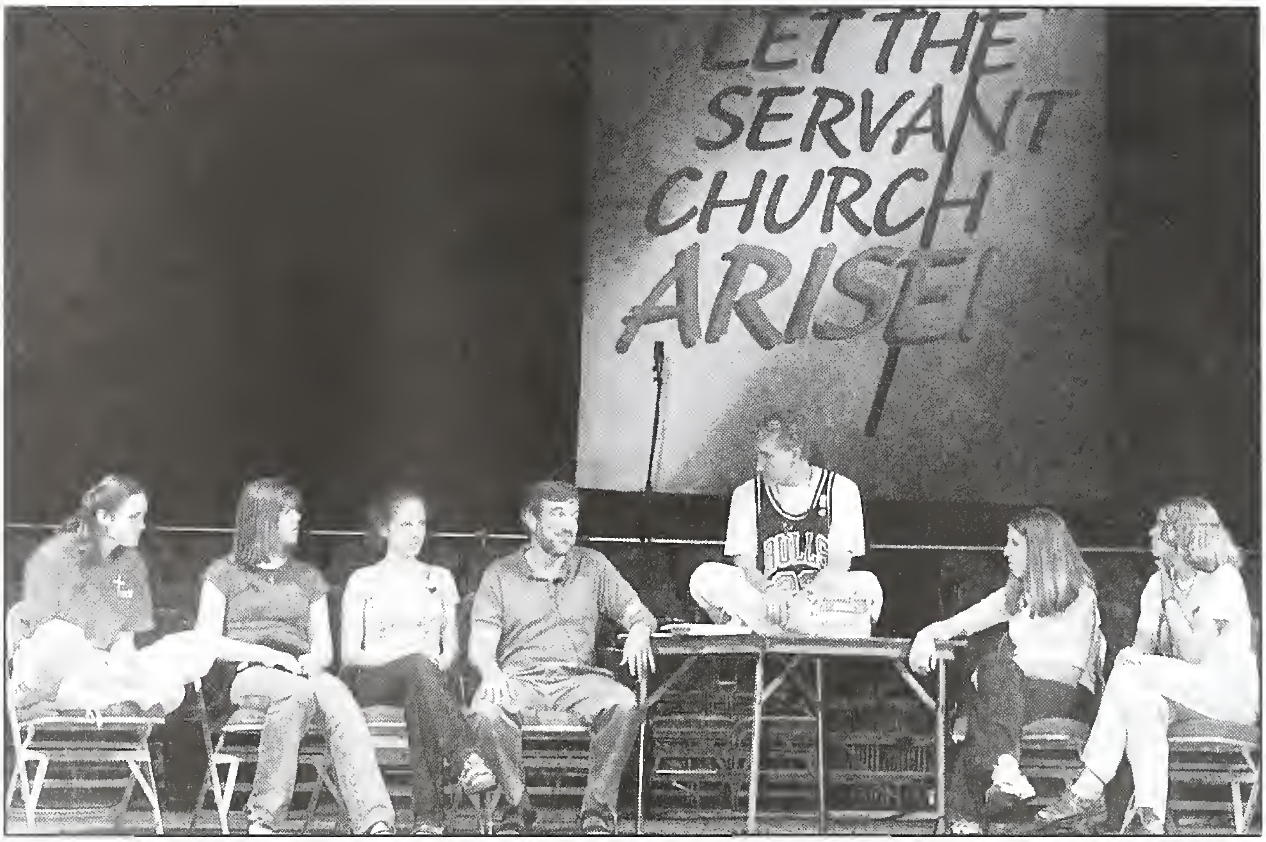
Moderator Lowell Flory *talks things over with his sometimes traveling companion, Mac the Moose.*

A clear call for nonviolence

In the wake of the tragedy at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo., earlier this year, the General Board in its pre-conference meetings drafted a resolution to submit to the 1999 Annual Conference calling congregations and members to recommit to the denomination's heritage of nonviolence, and to "teach peace and pursue it" within their congregations and communities.

Among those who spoke in favor of the paper were several National Youth Cabinet members. They and others felt that in addition to calling young people in the church "to turn away from the culture of violence in its many manifestations in our society," that adults were also called to become more involved in the lives of their children and to teach and model peace.

Others spoke of how gun violence had touched their own family, friends, and communities. Gayle Hunter Sheller, of Springfield, Ore., told delegates she had been called as a chaplain to respond to the 1998 Springfield school shooting in which two parents were killed and 25 children were shot by a boy in the community.



A church youth group, *portrayed by actors from Ohio and Illinois, and their youth leader, played by Ken Kline Smeltzer, were the principals in the Live Report, spotlighting numerous ministries of the General Board.*

Before delegates accepted the resolution, they passed an amendment to encourage congregations to approach school boards and other public policy agencies to request development of curriculum and materials. These resources would teach and promote conflict resolution, anger control, and tolerance.

More business

In addition to the ministerial leadership paper and children and violence statement, Conference delegates considered other business items, elected new church representatives, and received various reports.

New business

A query from the Haxtun (Colo.) Church of the Brethren asked the denomination for "clarification regarding litigation and appropriate Christian response."

After some discussion, the delegate body accepted Standing Committee's recommendation to elect a study committee to present a draft position paper to the 2001 Annual Conference that would include guidance for individuals, congregations, and church agencies. Delegates elected Jeff Bach, Janet Mitchell-Dix, and Marty Smeltzer West to this committee.

Delegates voted down a Standing Committee recommendation that would have extended the term of Standing Committee members from three years to five.

Unfinished business

The delegates granted requests from three study committees for another year before reporting their findings to Conference. These were a committee to study congregational structure, a committee to review the process of calling leaders, and a committee to study Caring for the Poor.

Delegates also accepted Standing Committee's recommendation to accept a new process for considering unfunded Annual Conference mandates that will establish a review committee to determine the financial impact of all future mandates.

Agency reports

Among the reports heard and accepted by delegates was the first presented by **Association of Brethren Caregivers**

Regina Bryan

The end of an era: *Howard Royer, as staff for interpretation, was recognized for his role in producing the General Board Live Report for many years. Next year the report will take on a new format, highlighting the ministries of all Conference agencies.*

Regina Bryan

Warm appreciation *for Royer and his work on the Live Report came from the audience.*

Marilyn Montauban, *of the First Haitian church, Brooklyn, N.Y., sang during the Live Report.*

since becoming an official Conference agency. ABC's report outlined its new deacon resources, a new publication, and a forthcoming intergenerational work camp.

Bethany Theological Seminary president Eugene Roop announced the launch of Bethany's Institute for Ministry with Youth and Young Adults, an initiative to help pastors and churches minister to those groups.

Brethren Benefit Trust introduced two new services — ClearViewNet, an Internet access service, and Walden/BBT, a forthcoming socially responsible investment option. BBT also reported that its managed assets have quadrupled during the past 10 years.

This year's **General Board** Live Report depicted a youth group using Brethren Press curriculum that came alive via some unexpected visitors who helped teach the youth about inviting others to obedience and how to make choices for peace, service, and inclusion.

On Earth Peace Assembly, which turns 25 in October, highlighted the importance of each individual's call to peacemaking during its report to the delegate body. Bob Gross, director of OEPA's Ministry of Reconciliation program, announced MoR's intent to work more closely with congregations to increase peacemaking and reconciliation efforts in local communities.

Committee reports

Among committee reports presented to delegates, the Pastoral Compensation and Benefits Advisory Committee asked Conference delegates to approve a 2.1 percent cost of living adjustment for pastors for 2000.

2000 and Beyond

When Annual Conference 2000 gets under way in Kansas City with its theme of "Love as I have loved you," Brethren will experience a new format and focus to the yearly meeting. Conference will be shorter by a day, with a Saturday night to mid-day Wednesday schedule. The dates are July 15-19.

A stronger focus on worship, fellowship, and celebration of Brethren ministries will set the stage for denominational decision-making, as well as increased exposure to ecumenical leadership.

Next year, conferencegoers will hear David Haas, director of the Emmaus Center for Music, Prayer, and Ministry; Emanuel Cleaver, pastor of St. James United Methodist Church; and Tom Troeger, professor at Iliff School of Theology in Denver.

Regina Bryan

Incoming Moderator Emily Mumma, *pastor of Hollidaysburg (Pa.) Church of the Brethren, and incoming Moderator-Elect Phill Carlos Archbold, associate pastor of Brooklyn (N.Y.) First Church of the Brethren, are consecrated during Sunday morning's worship. 1999 Moderator Lowell Flory leads the laying on of hands that included Mumma's and Archbold's colleagues and family members.*

Elections name leaders

Phill Carlos Archbold, associate pastor of First Church of the Brethren, Brooklyn, N.Y., was elected to serve as moderator of the 215th Annual Conference, scheduled for Baltimore, Md. in 2001.

Archbold, 62, has congregational, district, and denominational experience that includes serving as Atlantic Northeast District evangelist and as a district representative on Annual Conference Standing Committee.

In the mid-1980s, he served as chair of the former Hispanic Ministries Committee. Archbold has spoken at Annual Conference and National Youth Conference.

In addition to electing a 2001 moderator, delegates also elected the following representatives —

- Marla Bieber Abe, Annual Conference Program and Arrangements Committee.
- Roy Unruh, General Board, at-large.
- Jill Bosler Best, General Board, Northern Indiana.
- Daniel McRoberts, General Board, Michigan.
- Winoma Spurgeon, General Board, West Marva.
- Tom Leard Longenecker, On Earth Peace Assembly.
- Phil Flory and Heidi Loomis, Association of Brethren Caregivers.
- Raymond Donadio, Jr., Brethren Benefit Trust.
- Gene Fahs, Bethany Theological Seminary (representing the colleges).
- Ronald Beachley, Pastoral Compensation and Benefits Committee (representing district executives).
- Belita Mitchell, Committee on Interchurch Relations.

Reorganizations

Two denominational boards elected officers for the coming year. The newly organized executive committee of the General Board includes Mary Jo Flory-Steury, chair; Stafford Frederick, vice-chair; and Bill Eberly; Christy Waltersdorff; Martha Barlow; and David Miller.

Brethren Benefit Trust elected Ann Quay to a second term as board chair. Plan members also recently elected Melvin Wampler to represent Bethany and the Brethren colleges.

Walt Wiltschek

The General Board *chose its executive committee members for the coming year. Front row: David Miller and Bill Eberly. Back row: Martha Barlow, Mary Jo Flory-Steury (chair), Christy Waltersdorff and Stafford Frederick (vice chair).*

Regina Bryan

Phill Carlos Archbold, *of Brooklyn, N.Y., was elected to serve as moderator-elect for the coming year. He will be moderator of the 2001 Annual Conference.*

derator Lowell Flory *presided over a calm t productive business meeting.*

Regina Bryan

Moderator Emily Mumma, *flanked by her husband, Luke, expresses her willingness to accept God's call to leadership despite her natural aversion to being in front of large groups.*

Regina Bryan

Association of Brethren Caregivers *board members and staff members gathered to present their report to the delegates. They are, front row: Margie Yoder Fultz, Marilyn Lerch Scott (board chair-elect), Nancy Faus, June Gibble (staff), Connie Burk Davis, Linda Timmons (staff), Mary Dulabaum (staff). Second row: Bentley Peters, Roger Golden (staff), Steve Mason (executive director), Scott Douglas, and Robert Cain (board chair).*

Developing our spirits

Nevin Dulabaum

The Labyrinth, *an aid to prayer, was used by Lucille Snowden, of Hershey, Pa.*

BY ERIN MATTESON

For those who could pull their bodies out of bed early at Annual Conference there was an incredible opportunity waiting to awaken their faith as well. In the past, many have appreciated evening worship at Conference, but this year the early-morning Spiritual Development options, beginning daily at 7 a.m., provided opportunity for some creative worship and worshipful experiences to begin the day.

Each event was hosted by the Congregational Life Teams under the direction of Glenn Timmons. Wednesday morning Phil Grout, artist and pastor of the Genesis Church of the Brethren in Putney, Vt., quieted those gathered and then shared his video, "Stations of the Resurrection," a narration with closeups of his art depicting Jesus' journey to Jerusalem, and the final week of his life, including the resurrection and ascension.

More than simply watching the video, we were surrounded where we sat by Grout's art itself, allowing a much deeper experience as he shared scripture and commentary on Jesus' life and mission. It was a wonderful invitation to journey with Jesus' compassion and caring.

Daybreak Thursday morning beckoned all who would heed the call to come and learn about and experience the Labyrinth. Brief sharing by CLT leader David Smalley and personal preparation took place in one room, while an actual Labyrinth, created by Area One CLT coordinator, Beth Sollenberger Morphew, awaited our walking feet in a nearby room.

The Labyrinth is a circular pathway which eventually leads to a small center, and then invites one to journey back out again. The Labyrinth invites one to enter and walk to the center, journeying inward, seeking all the while to focus on a scripture, a challenge, or one's relationship with God and Christ Jesus.

As we reach the center, we are invited to take a moment to be especially present with God, to stop and listen with new ears, or to simply be quiet and listen. Then when we are ready, we begin the journey outward once more, returning to everyday existence, hopefully with fresh breath and a renewed heart.

We were greeted Friday morning by silence and a simple worship center, which included only a picture of Jesus surrounded by small votive candles. Musicians readied themselves and stayed in the back, since they were not to become the focus of the event. Each participant took a songbook of simple chants before they sat down.

The Taizé worship experience was planned by Becky Rhodes, minister of music, and Karen Carter, ordained member, both from the Williamson Road congregation, Roanoke, Va. Becky and Karen have both been to France, where the Taizé community there welcomes young and old alike who gather from around the world to worship

Contemplation: *Earla Reffner, of Roaring Springs, Pa., at Milwaukee's Midwest Express Center.*

Nevin Dulabaum

Spiritual development *workshop participants experienced Taizé worship.*

together and discern life questions and callings.

Taizé services are typically planned using periods of silence between scripture readings and sung simple phrase chants, which can come in a variety of languages. The Spirit moved simply and yet profoundly that morning, as the gathered group moved in silence from awkwardly ending repeated sung phrases, to sensing how to end songs together by the time the hour and a half service was at an end.

Saturday morning was a time to grow in understanding of the art of spiritual direction, as we not only heard about it but also experienced it together. Glenn Mitchell, trained spiritual director and pastor of the State College, Pa., congregation, offered helpful descriptions of spiritual direction. He said it is "tuning in to God to find greater harmony with self and others," and "a process by which an individual seeking to be more attentive to God in their life goes to a director, guide, soul friend, or companion for sharing, praying, and listening, to be more responsive to God in daily living."

Although spiritual direction comes originally from the Roman Catholic tradition, its grounding in prayer and the assumption that God is present and moving in our midst can be seen as quite Brethren as well.

Mitchell invited those present to divide up into couples and switch off practicing the art of spiritual direction, not attempting to teach or solve, but rather focusing on being present and listening to one another. He suggested preparing through prayer to listen to one another, followed by praying and sharing together about what was revealed.

The sharing time largely involved the listener asking simple questions about where the partner sharing might note or detect God's presence in their life. Many commented on the challenge of listening to another without interrupting, as well as the gift of having another pray with you, and truly listen to you, quietly for a long period.

Glenn Mitchell summed up the wonder of the early morning spiritual development opportunities well when he said, "I used to think 7-11 was a convenience store. Now I understand it as the Annual Conference schedule. I have often wondered, with such a busy schedule, when do we have time or take time to listen? In a schedule that can be so busy, so full, I am grateful for the opportunities we have been given this year to begin our day with listening."

The nourishment that came from beginning each day at Conference with the development of our spiritual lives was truly an experience of great refreshment.

In addition to coffee cups, those who brought their "personal cups" at 7 a.m. seemed to find the living water which, we are told by Jesus in John 4:14, "will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." Several Brethren left the early morning sessions "gushing," at least over to business by 9 a.m. It seemed a fine start toward eternal life.

Erin Matteson is pastor of Faith Church of the Brethren, Batavia, Ill.

The many faces of worship

Linetta Alley

Cindy Laprade

Paul Mundey

Kurt Snyder

BY KURT BORGMANN

If we've heard it once, we've heard it a million times: "I love the singing at Annual Conference. There's nothing like joining your voice with thousands of others to sing a great hymn of the church."

And it's true. The congregational singing (indeed the music on the whole) is typically one of the characterizing and beloved elements of worship at Annual Conference. It was no different at Milwaukee this year. We sang the old, familiar hymns, with great enthusiasm of course. But who could deny that the Spirit was present when Gilbert Romero led us on Sunday morning in the hymn "Tu has venido a la orilla" ("Lord, you have come to the lakeshore") as we all stood arm in arm and moved to the music? The music is powerful.

But there are some other elements of worship, special to the Annual Conference experience, that are also powerful — elements that help to bring us into the presence of God in refreshing ways. This year, it was the varied voices, the wide participation, the powerful symbols, and the fullness of space and time that added to meaningfulness of worship.

Varied voices

At Annual Conference, each day a new preacher preaches and each one speaks in a different voice. This year, across the week, we heard voices calling us to service, to humility, to acceptance, to evangelism. We heard different tones and different styles, but each voice was a gospel voice and each voice was fervent in its proclamation of the Word.

Our preachers included Lowell Flory, the moderator for the conference; Patrick Mellerson, pastor of Butler Chapel, whose burned church building in South Carolina the Brethren helped to replace; Nancy Faus, retired Bethany Seminary professor; Linetta Alley and Cindy Laprade, last year's National Youth Conference youth preachers; Kurt Snyder, pastor of the Roann, Ind. congregation; and Paul Mundey, senior pastor of the Frederick, Md., congregation.

Most of us in our home churches listen week after week to one preacher who proclaims the gospel in one voice. But charged as we each are with proclaiming the gospel to different sorts of people, isn't it helpful to hear God's Word interpreted and given shape through the voices of different people?

Patrick Mellerson

Michelle Grimm

Lowell Flory

Nancy Faus

Wide participation

The varied gifts of leadership and creativity offered during worship over the course of the week included the contributions of soloists, musical ensembles, choral readers, and a conference choir. There were also testimonials, liturgical dance, signing for the deaf, and drama presentations. It was striking how many people offered their gifts for worship.

This meant that the "offering time" wasn't just that time in the worship service when the offering bags were passed. Instead, the offering time went on throughout the worship service, as gifts of worship-expression were offered by dozens of people.

Powerful symbols

For the Brethren, feetwashing is a powerful symbol of what we believe and who we intend to be. But can it speak to more than individual relationships, the way it usually does back home in our love feasts?

Thursday night, the evening that Patrick Mellerson of the Butler Chapel AME church preached, it did just that. The worship service climaxed with the symbol of feetwashing shared between Pastor Mellerson, Torin Eikenberry, who spent his BVS year working there, and Tom Hostetler, who was serving as the worship leader that evening.

As they washed each other's feet, while Mark Liller recited from memory the John 13 scripture, the familiar symbol of feetwashing spoke in a new way. It spoke of new relationships across race and denomination. But perhaps even more importantly, it truly symbolized how serving each other frees us from our fears and our pride.

Fullness of space and time

Worship at Annual Conference is experienced in the fullness of space and time. What needs to happen is going to happen — no matter how long it takes! It's not just that "more happens" in an Annual Conference worship service and that the preacher (usually) preaches longer than the preacher back home. It's also that there is time created within the service for reflection and confession and prayer.

Whether it's a full and soaring prelude, a thoughtfully crafted guided prayer, or a calming Taizé song, repeated over and over, there is a sense that time can stand still while we are gathered to worship, and that it is worship that will carry us through the week. In Milwaukee, the singing certainly was great, but it was the whole experience of worship that carried us through the week.

Kurt Borgmann is pastor of the Oakton, Va. congregation.

Going the extra mile: *Joel Peterson, of Ft. Wayne, Ind., took part in a junior high service project to pick up litter in Milwaukee.*

Children liked the critters and the choir

BY WALT WILTSCHEK

Just a short stroll from the main arena where Annual Conference business sessions were held, cavernous Bruce Hall auditorium rang with the sounds of excited children. While adults were hard at work, children were hard at play at Conference children's activities.

Days began with some free time, then moved on to singing led by Peg Lehman, crafts, and a variety of "discovery center" learning activities, plus two field trips during the week — one to the Milwaukee County Zoo and the other to a children's museum. By all accounts, the scheduled events were a hit.

"Worship was boring," said 8-year-old Justin Hollenberg of York, Pa., about the large evening sessions in the arena, "but the activities were fun!" The zoo seemed to be the star attraction of the week, with nearly every kid within earshot talking about the trip and all the critters they saw there.

"I saw all kinds of animals," said 8-year-old Amy Gab-

Regina Bryan

The children of Conference, *led in singing by Peg Lehman, performed for the adults at the opening of the evening worship service.*

bard of Dayton, Ohio. "I even saw a giraffe."

"I liked going to the zoo," echoed another 8-year-old, Craig Morphew of Elgin, Ill. "I liked the Wisconsin something." After prompting from a friend he finished: "Oh, yeah! The Wisconsin badger!"

Six-year-old Emily Peters of Pennsylvania said she got a peacock feather from the trip and also liked the museum a lot, while Kezia Roop, also 6, from Mauertown, Va., gave high ratings to the cows. Abby Steele, 7, of Martinsburg, Pa., couldn't decided which animals she liked the best, saying she "loved it all."

That all tied in well with the "Critters in the Choir" song that the children worked on during the week, part of their daily practices for a children's choir concert they gave before the main worship service Saturday evening.

Megan Kohler, 11, of Marion, Ind., said "I liked the singing," listing as her favorite "We Are One Body," a song sung at Friday evening's worship service. Matthew Petcher, of Citronelle, Ala., meanwhile, didn't have to think long about his favorite part of the week: "Free time for me," he said. "We just played!" He said he liked playing foursquare the best.

Walt Wiltschek

Jennifer Scarr, *of Bakersfield, Calif., enjoys ice cream at the Hilton.*

There was plenty of room for foursquare and much more in the hall, which had chairs set up for singing at one end and tables piled with activities lined up along each side, with open space in the middle. The various activity centers included an area for reading, craft tables of all sorts, banner-making, board games, and more, like hula hoops and colorful parachutes.

The Journey of Young Adults (JOYA) team, sponsored by On Earth Peace Assembly, also came in one afternoon to lead the children in games, Bible skits, and other lessons. Much of the action came as a result of hard work from Kathryn Radcliff and Pat Rittle of Elgin, Ill., who served as children's co-coordinators for the week. They each worked at their specialties, pulled in some other people to help, recruited parents and others to be volunteers each day, and made it all happen for the nearly 150 children who registered. "It's been a real good week," Rittle said. "The kids have been good — really receptive and cooperative."

Rittle especially praised the zoo, which even did a special cookout for the group, and the JOYA team, who "had the kids right with them from the beginning." Of course, it might be best not to say too much more about the children's activities — otherwise it might be hard to get the adults to go to those business sessions next year.

Walt Wiltschek is associate pastor at Westminster (Md.) Church of the Brethren, working with children, youth, and young adults.

Renewal happens!

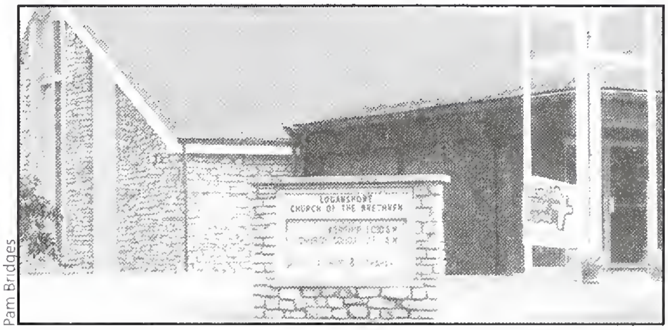
The hardest part is asking for help

There's a stubborn streak of individualism in America, not only in people, but in churches as well. Even though scripture calls us to be dependent on and accountable to each other, we somehow think if we don't go it alone there's something wrong with us. It's hard to ask for help.

In direct contrast to this attitude, the Logansport Church of the Brethren in the South Central Indiana District, reached out for help to the district and to sister congregations — and experienced transformation.

The Logansport story was the subject of an Insight Session at the Milwaukee Annual Conference and bears repeating.

By the fall of 1997 the congregation, which had been yoked to another congregation for the previous six years, felt exhausted. Attendance was less than fifty a Sunday, and it felt like the same people were doing all the work. As Jeff Graham, now one of the copastors of Logansport said, “Some members told me that there came a point where they almost dreaded coming to church on Sunday. They were working on keeping the doors open. It seemed like all they could think about was whether there was enough money to pay the bills. They couldn't concentrate on worshiping the Lord.”


Pam Bridges

People have heard *there's something new going on at Logansport Church of the Brethren, and they're coming to find out what it is.*

The church board decided that they couldn't go on as they were, so they turned to their district ministers, Ron and Harriet Finney, for help. At a council meeting in January of 1998 Ron remembers, “I asked them how willing are you to take a risk? Are you serious about a new beginning?”

The church was willing. The two came up with a proposal. The church board members would take a sabbatical; the district board took responsibility for the church. Two sister congregations, the Mexico and Roann congregations, along with their pastors, Tim Deardorff, Kurt Snyder, and Bruce Hostetler, established a partnership for renewal. Indianapolis-based Duane Grady, employed by the General Board as a Congregational Life Team member, encouraged and promoted the project. He also helped the congregation conduct a six-month review of progress.

Two licensed ministers from the Mexico congregation, Jeff Graham and Aaron Gross, stepped forward and answered a call to share the Logansport pastorate. In the words of Ron Finney, “The church was reignited. Everything had doubled. Worship attendance and giving doubled. Sunday School attendance tripled. There was definitely the movement of the Holy Spirit in that place.”

Janet Reed was board chair of Logansport at the time the decisions were made. “I'd read some church growth books,” she said, “and little by little it occurred to me we were accepting what we'd become instead of trying to find ways to become something else. God didn't intend for us to remain a small church. We were making it that way. The Executive Committee and I decided to turn everything over to the Lord.”

Janet said that things are exciting at church now. “It's more than the numbers. It's a feeling of the Holy Spirit being present. Before we had a lot of despair and apathy. Now it's a spirit-filled church.”

Both Jeff and Aaron have worked full time with a construction company while devoting an additional 20 hours a week to the church. However, Logansport is on the verge of calling them as joint pastors.

Aaron said, “The church has an excitement for ministry right now. They're eagerly desiring to go out and share the Gospel with people. They want other people to come. It's been kind of exciting. They've got a new sense of excitement in that congregation. That's helped them to feel like going out and sharing that with people. God has blessed us and brought a lot of people who have heard that something is going on at Logansport. Then all of a sudden they're a part of the congregation.”

Jeff Graham felt the same calling as Aaron, to work outside their home church. “I was interested when I heard that Mexico and Roann were going to help Logansport. The Lord laid on my heart that he wanted me to be involved in pastoral ministry. The door opened and things really lined up and we ended up over there.”

Like everyone else, Jeff perceives a dramatic change in the Logansport church. “People come to the church with excitement for Sunday morning worship, expecting to have an encounter with the Lord.”

Frank Ramirez is pastor of the Elkhart Valley Church of the Brethren, Elkhart, Ind.

Lifesavers on overtime

Interim disaster response managers faced a landslide of challenges during six months they'll never forget

STORY BY WALT WILTSCHEK
PHOTOS BY PHIL GROUT

EMERGENCY RESPONSE
SERVICE MINISTRIES

When Marianne and Bob Pittman, *interim co-managers of Emergency Response/Service Ministries, answered a call, they knew the church would provide the support needed to perform the task.*

Conflict in Kosovo. Refugee camps in New Jersey. Tornadoes in the Plains. A plane crash in Little Rock. Floods. Earthquakes. Crops freezing. Hurricane recovery.

Bob and Marianne Pittman expected a challenge when they answered the call to be interim co-managers of the Church of the Brethren's Emergency Response/ Service Ministries in January, but they never expected the challenges would come in such a landslide.

"It was a little different than we thought it would be," Marianne said in understatement. "Sometimes we'd say to each other, 'Can we hold this together?' "

But hold it together they did, and then some. Nearly half a million dollars in aid was sent out from January, when they took over for retiring ER/SM director Miller Davis, to early June. That money from the Emergency Disaster Fund went literally to all corners of the world, meeting a wide variety of needs. As they look at it, though, the Pittmans say they didn't really do it, but rather God, and the church, did it through them.

They didn't jump at the opportunity when Global Mission Partnerships director Merv Keeney called them last year in Blacksburg, Va., where Marianne had been a pastor.

Bob said he and his wife had been volunteers and project directors for disaster relief responses and were trained caregivers for children in those situations, so they were a natural choice in some ways. In fact, they had offered to be project directors again just weeks before Keeney's call came.

"We have a firm belief that ER/SM is key to who the Church of the Brethren is," Marianne said. "Bearing one another's burdens, bringing the cup of cold water — it's really something we're interested in." Still, they don't know how their name came up for the ER/SM interim director's job.

"We've asked often who had something against us," Marianne said with a laugh. "Merv Keeney said 'We're asking you to go to New Windsor as interims. We said, 'How long?' He said, 'Six months.'"

At first they felt that would be too long, and they were concerned about their lack of computer experience, but eventually the call won out over their trepidations. When January rolled around, they rolled into the hills of New Windsor, Md., and met the 20 employees of ER/SM.

"There's something about a call like that," Marianne said. "If the church calls you to a task, the church will undergird and support you. You recognize that even if you fail, the church will be there to support you." They needed all that support and undergirding as the series of disasters struck, and bombs fell in the Balkans, and requests began streaming in.

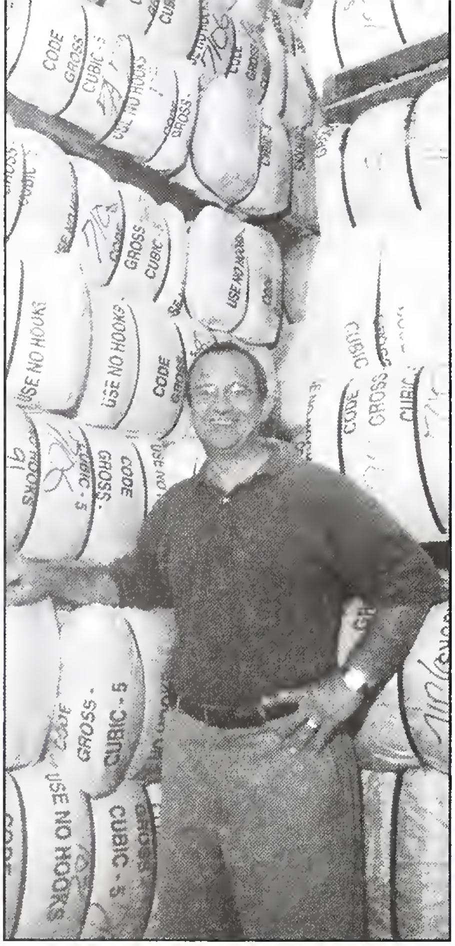
Grants went to Tennessee and

Arkansas for tornado cleanup first, then to the Chiapas region of Mexico, then to Sierra Leone, and Texas, and Rwanda and Hurricane Mitch cleanup efforts.

While the money kept pouring out, material aid went, too, as the material resources personnel — who the Pittmans call the "unsung heroes" of the operation — worked overtime to send clothes, health kits, and other aid. Volunteers and financial donations flowed in, too. These were, and continue to be, critical in meeting the varied needs, according to the Pittmans.

In addition to the impressive ER/SM load, the distribution center also handles additional loads. It does preparation and shipping for 22 denominational and nonprofit agencies, including Church World Service, Lutheran World Relief, Interchurch Medical Assistance, Inc., United Methodist Committee on Relief, and the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Thus when the wheels kick into high gear, frenetic is the only word to describe the pace in an otherwise serenely peaceful small town. Supplies fly across tables, crates zip from one end of the warehouse to the other, and large trucks come in and out of the docks.



Stanley Noffsinger, *the new director of Emergency Response/ Service Ministries, in front of material aid to be shipped to needy people all over the world.*

Loretta Wolf, the center's manager of material resources, said this past spring's work included 22 trailer loads of tents, plastic, water jugs, and wool blankets for Kosovo — the largest single shipment ever sent out by the center.

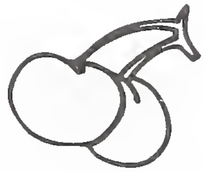
"It was a work-all-through-the-weekend kind of deal," Wolf said. "The workload really did increase." The Pittmans' lives finally became less hectic in late June, when Stanley Noffsinger moved to New Windsor from Wichita, Kan., to become the new, permanent director of ER/SM. He's seen how busy a job it can be, calling Bob and Marianne "wonderful, wonderful servants" of the church.

Even so, he has that same sense of calling that his predecessors sensed, and a deep appreciation for ER/SM's work.

"This church has an incredible heart that goes out to people in need, no matter where it is," Noffsinger said. "I've always been amazed at the Church of the Brethren's willingness, despite its size, to be a pioneer. I hope we continue to be a pioneer as responders to need."

Walt Wiltschek is associate pastor at the Westminster (Md.) Church of the Brethren.

Brethrening



We disagree but could be good neighbors

One recent Saturday morning, two walking visitors approached me, literature in hand, as I tended lawn in front of my home. From previous experience I surmised that these neatly dressed women, much, much younger than I, wished to discuss serious business with me—Armageddon and my place in eternity.

I, being in no crunch for time, and not being one to avoid theological discussion, decided to invest a block of time and engage in "tri-alogue."

In retrospect, it seems that we three were good listeners as well as aggressive debaters as we interacted with point/counterpoint. But it was obvious that in this intense tug-of-war neither "side" was about to pull the other into the mud pit between us.

After 30 to 40 minutes we agreed to disagree. "Let me share something with you," I proffered, and led them around the garage to view my garden and several patches of wildflowers which were putting on a dazzling performance. There is a kind of reverence when one stands in the presence of beauty—and we three experienced it and expressed it as we embraced the scene for a time.

On the other side of disaster

A caregiver receives care

Loretta Wolf has spent more than 23 years helping the Church of the Brethren and others respond to disasters.

She started as a receiver/packer at the distribution center in New Windsor, Md., in 1976. Later she moved into data entry at the center, then into a support-staff role, and then into the position of administrative secretary for the director. Finally, in 1985, she moved back into the material resources department, now serving as manager of material resources for the denomination's Emergency Response/Service Ministries.

"I've kind of grown up at the center," Wolf said. "I really enjoy the challenge it provides for me."

In all that time of helping out others, though, she never expected to be on the other side of the disaster response.

That changed this past March, when she received a call at work saying that her barn was on fire. She rushed home hoping to at least save some of the animals, but by the time she got there the fire had not only consumed almost all of the barn but also spread via strong winds to her nearby house. It was a near-total loss.

Interim ER/SM directors Bob and Marianne Pittman came out right away, she said, along with another staff person. Additional support, emotional and material, quickly followed from them and many others at New Windsor and beyond.

"The people at the center showed a lot of concern," Wolf said. "They always were asking, 'How are you doing?,' 'Is there anything we can help with?' They were very supportive."

They helped her and her family find space at the center to live, too, after the initial support from the American Red Cross. Little gifts and donations like pots and toilet paper and other supplies helped it feel more like home.

"It was very difficult," Wolf said. "Helping other people is so easy from my vantage point, but accepting that — at first we just said, 'We'll be okay.' But the Pittmans said other people need to respond, too, just as you need to respond. It took a while to get that into my system."

She still doesn't like the sound of sirens, but there is some good news — great news, in fact. Her new house is going up, shingles are going on, and she expects to be in it this fall.

She's been aiding disaster *victims for 23 years, but when her house burned Loretta Wolf became a victim herself.*

"Before you go, may I show you something else . . . do ou like cherries?" Affirmative from both as we walked to he other side of my home. There, my 40-year-old cherry ree stood, hanging heavy with luscious, sweet fruit. There is a special joy and satisfaction in picking your own ruit and eating it ripe and juicy on the spot—and spitting eeds on the earth's carpet below.

While we picked and gorged, we talked of our trees and gardens, our successes and failures, and shared a lot about he bounties of nature—no point/counterpoint here.

When my visitors departed carrying bags of cherries, I mused that they would make nice neighbors and hoped they would feel the same about me. And I thought about how often theology is divisive while simple acts of kindness bring us together. —Gene Palsgrove

Gene Palsgrove is a retired teacher and administrator and a member of the Modesto (Calif.) Church of the Brethren.

Messenger would like to publish other short, colorful, humorous or poignant stories of real-life incidents involving Brethren. Please send your submission to Messenger, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120-1694 or e-mail to the editor at ffarrar_gb@brethren.org.

Idol pursuits

Overconsumption not only harms the earth, it damages our relationship to God

The average US citizen *consumes 60 times more material resources per person than residents of poorer nations.*

STORY AND PHOTOS BY DAVID RADCLIFF

It is the year 2323. An interplanetary spaceship has landed on Earth on a research mission from a nearby solar system. Humankind has long since disappeared from the planet, but marks of human habitation still remain just under the sod and beneath the branches of towering trees.

Curious about the one-time inhabitants of this shiny blue and green planet, the visitors begin to excavate. Finding their way through successive layers of human history, they finally arrive at a period which, to their keen sensors, seems to be a turning point. It is an era some 300 sun-revolutions earlier, at what was known as the 20th and 21st centuries. According to their analysis, this was the time that the inhabitants' relationship with their planet changed drastically.

Until then, human impact on the planet had been more or less benign. Certainly there was evidence of small-scale disruptions due to mining and industry and agriculture, but nothing like what would transpire at that key juncture.

Beginning around 400 sun-revolutions earlier, these interlopers observed that the main activity of this lost race began to be the extraction of the planet's material bounty. This might not have been so troublesome had these materials been used and reused. For the most part, however, this had not been done. The archaeological record showed a marked tendency to use extracted materials only once, with items summarily trashed after a single use.

Closer examination of this level of history told the story more clearly. There were large deposits of refuse and evidence of massive deforestation. There were silted and polluted waterways and sunken water tables. Key ecosystems had collapsed due to habitat destruction and the consequent wholesale disappearance of thousands of species of plants and animals. And core samples of the oldest trees revealed evidence of widespread climate change soon after this period, a clear but perhaps unintended consequence of their dependence on fossil fuels.

There was also evidence of widespread conflict centered around areas of abundant resources — especially oil. Evidently, the visitors concluded, materials eventually became so scarce that there was not enough to satisfy everyone, and war ensued.

Science fiction? We can hope so. I am afraid, however, that it will take more than hope to keep at least some approximation of this scenario from coming to pass.

Many of us are already living what our futuristic visitors supposedly found. Our consumption of the earth's bounty far exceeds its ability to sustain us—or itself.

According to the recently published *Our Ecological Footprint* (New Society Publishers), there are just over 20 billion acres of productive land on the planet on which humankind may draw to sustain itself. This includes forests and fields and all other arable or otherwise productive areas. Since the earth's population is now at 6 billion people, this comes out to a little over 3 acres per person.

As the authors of the book calculate it, many of the earth's inhabitants use nowhere near their fair share of the earth to meet their needs. This is primarily due to their poverty. The 1.5 billion people who live on less than one dollar per day do not have the purchasing power to greatly impact the earth.

The richest fifth of the world's people are not similarly restrained. Members of this group, which includes most North Americans, use more than their share of the earth to provide for their level of consumption. Indeed, they consume about 60 times more material goods per captia than is consumed by the world's poorest people. They use from three to ten times their share of the earth's bounty. In other words, these wealthy ones require from 10 to 30 acres per person to sustain their level of consumption, when only three or so acres is their share.

If everyone in the world consumed at the rate of those who use three times their share, three planets like the one we have would be needed simply to provide for us.

There are a number of conclusions Christians may draw from this startling information. First, it doesn't seem quite fair that some people are using much more than their share of the earth's bounty. There is something about this arrangement that doesn't square with the biblical idea of justice. And an economic and social or theological system that allows for, or even encourages, this kind of disparity must be questioned.

A second concern has to do with our stewardship of God's creation—or the lack of stewardship we display by our overconsuming ways. Biologists call our era the sixth great extinction period, and the first to be caused by one of the earth's species — humankind. Species are disappearing at 1,000 times the historic rate. Forests are being cut at a pace of nearly 40 million acres a year. In the US, 400,000 acres (or about two New York Cities) are being paved or built over every year, replacing fields and forests and wetlands.

And there are signs everywhere, from tree rings in northern Asia, to butterflies' choice of nesting sites in Europe, to the retreat of glaciers around the world, that the earth's climate is changing due to our voracious consumption of fossil fuels.

Does the earth belong to the Lord? Did God create the species and pronounce them "good"? Do we care what kind of planet we pass on to our children and grandchildren? It often seems that while our lips confess one thing, our actions confess another.

Even with our concerns about justice and stewardship of the earth, there is another more fundamental dimension to our appetite for material goods.

An ancient story may be a clue for what is really at stake here. In Exodus 32, the Israelites turn from the living God to a golden calf as the object of their worship. What was the purpose of an idol such as this? To receive our adoration and sacrifice. To bless the community with material goods, fertility, military prowess, *things*. To passively receive worship without demanding obedience.

And the Israelites' response to their newly created god? They engaged in raucous play and uninhibited devotion to their desires. What a metaphor for our consuming passions! We, too, seem intent on letting nothing stand in the way of our pursuit of pleasure, comfort, and the latest styles—to the point that our purchases, even of things as expensive and as costly to the environment as an automobile, often seem aimed more at making a fashion statement than at any other consideration.

Is it too handy to borrow such a strong biblical image and apply it directly to a current reality? After all, we're not actually fashioning golden gods to dance around.

But recall Jesus' teaching along a remarkably similar vein. "You cannot serve both God and mammon." Here Jesus makes it clear that if God has one

How will humankind relate *to God's earth in the coming century? The answer hinges on our attitudes and actions.*

Plants and animals *are faced with tremendous pressure from human activity, yet show remarkable resilience.*

primary competitor in the human heart for ultimate allegiance, it is materialism. Materialism alone is so alluring to humankind that it can regularly siphon off the devotion we should offer solely to God.

Do our consuming ways and our fervent desire for material rewards meet the criteria for an old-fashioned Old Testament idol, or the godlike mammon of the New Testament?

We might ask ourselves these questions: Do we turn to material things to find a sense of identity? Are we willing to set aside other important values —like the health of the planet or what would be fair for all—in the pursuit of these things? Do we find that we accumulate for ourselves to the point that our sharing with others is diminished? Are our personal and spiritual energies devoted to God and our daily discipleship, or to the pursuit of material goods? Have we created a theology to justify our consuming ways, or do we allow ourselves to look critically at how much we have, how we use it, and what God's hopes are for the world?

As it turns the corner into the next century, the human family faces many serious challenges. Not least among these is our relationship to God's earth and to the other people who live here. But more basic than this is our relationship to the Creator. If we, like the ancient Israelites, are content with a golden god, one who expects little but promises much, we will suffer their fate. Left to our own designs, our passions will run wild and our "playing" will lead ultimately to destruction.

On seeing the people dancing around the fire before their new-found god, the Lord said to Moses, "Go down, for your people are on the verge of self-destruction." They were about to destroy themselves by turning to a false god instead of to the living God.

What a telling image for our day and the challenges we face! We, too, may be on the verge of self-destruction, and perhaps for the very same reasons as the Israelites of old: seeking security and even salvation in things material and close at hand. And, like the rich man in Jesus' parable in Luke 19, we can become so oblivious in our consumption that we fail to notice the unfortunate one at our doorstep — to our eternal dismay.

What would it mean for us to turn our devotion away from the golden calves of our day and toward the eternal presence of the living God? A short list might include:

•Turning toward the world and its people. As we learn more about how others live and how our actions affect the planet, our hearts can be moved and our behavior changed.

•Turning away from incessant consumption. A small step would be to honor the Lord's Day as a day of rest, rather than another day to shop or work. This "rest" becomes a deeply theological statement that we do not secure our lives by constant striving after things, but rather that our lives depend on God's provision.

•Turning off the television, staying away from the mall, putting down the fashion magazines. The constant drumbeat of consumption sooner or later convinces us that we must join the parade.

•Turning to God and God's acceptance of each of us for who we are. This leads to the kind of self-acceptance that is the best antidote to the temptation to look to things to assure our self-worth.

I hope that future visitors to our planet will discover that our era was indeed a turning point for the earth and its people. But I hope they find, rather than a turning away from care for the earth and for one another, that we seized this moment to turn toward good stewardship and just treatment of all people. And more importantly, that we began to turn toward the God who asks for our complete devotion, and promises us life in return, even unto the tenth generation. Which would just about get us to 2323.

David Radcliff is director of Brethren Witness for the Church of the Brethren General Board.

Letters

I have decided to focus my life and energy in the years ahead on the church instead of the chapel.

Chapel or church?

A recent experience at the Timbercrest Church of the Brethren Home, where I now live, has caused me to reflect on, to compare and contrast, "church" and "chapel." The chapel committee plans and provides a half-hour experience of worship, six days every week, 313 services each year, with pastoral and lay speakers secured from the churches of the area.

I have been asked to chair the chapel committee, a job that would require about half-time ministry as a volunteer. I am now serving as interim pastor of a church on a half-time basis. I am facing the question, where shall I serve, chapel or church?

Both have a building used regularly for services of worship. Both are more than, and different from, the building in which they meet. In both the services of worship are similar.

But there seems to be a striking contrast in the mission of church and chapel. The purpose of the chapel is to provide inspiring services for all those who meet for worship on a regular basis. It exists for the "in group." Its mission is not to reach outsiders, or to serve the larger community or world.

The church's essential mission is to those outside or beyond the local group—to share the faith and make disciples, to minister to the needs of the community and the world. It is to train and involve every member in its outreach, in its mission and varied ministries. The church is to "Continue the work of Jesus" in its community, nation, and world.

I have observed one congregation that resembles a chapel more than a church! As a member of the District Task Team on Evangelism and Church Growth, I am sensing that many of our congregations bear a stronger resemblance to chapel than to church. They seem to exist for the "in group," for the present membership. Many of them are now largely a cluster of older members, with little or no effective "disciple-making" or evangelism for decades.

I have decided to focus my life and energy in the years ahead on the church instead of the chapel. The Gospel writer Matthew credits Jesus with saying, "I will build my church." He has called me, and every follower, to "Go make disciples," to go with Him in a continuing ministry to a world of need.

I feel it is urgent, the time is now, for every Brethren congregation to make an in-depth study of its life and mission, to discern if it is truly Jesus' church or just a local chapel, serving its own members. This may be the first key to new life and growth, to the spiritual renewal so much needed in our beloved Church of the Brethren.

Olden D. Mitchell
North Manchester, Ind.

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Take time for youth

The June Messenger article by Walt Wiltschek had a most positive note in it regarding Brethren young people wanting to be more involved in the life and work of the church. A pertinent part of this work is what we do to facilitate the involvement of members to get the youth work done.

Often we hear, "But I don't have the time to do it." Those who find joy in possibilities by taking responsibility have found an answer to that. If you want to have more time, take on more responsibility. If we do not have time, our relationship to time needs to be looked at. Adults who have time have learned the fine art of exciting young people to use their special talents in engaging others in doing the work. Then young people become involved doing things that they feel make a difference.

Youth need to have a say in the work of the church. The experience of having a say is what turns them on. This is where the gifts of God within them become channeled, and amazing things happen. Leaders in the Kingdom are essentially facilitators in this process. May the aspirations to follow the light which emerges from the hearts and minds of our youth come to focus and fruition in the church they want to serve.

Andrew G. Mathis
Tampa, Fla.

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Program Director wanted for Camp Bethel in Virlina District, near Roanoke, VA. Full time position. Contact Manager, Camp Bethel, 540-992-2940 or e-mail: camp.bethel@juno.com.

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Prairie City, Iowa: Bob Clymer, Kelli Clymer, Matt Ayers, Katie Green, Julie Timmons, Jason Trunnel, Dana Loomis
Salisbury, Md.: Mike and Dottie March
South Waterloo, Waterloo, Iowa: Chris Greiman, Alison Flory Replogle, Shawn Flory Replogle
Union Center, Nappanee, Ind.: Tara Hepler, Jon and Christina Eshelman,

Wedding anniversaries

Albertson, Robert and Mary Ellen, Michigan City, Ind., 50
Anderson, Charles and Bernice, Uniontown, Pa., 65
Baker, Robert and Rose, Martinsburg, Pa., 50
Bowman, Paul and Sarah, Stanardsville, Va., 55
Clapper, Paul and Gladys, Altoona, Pa., 60
Embry, Ashby and Ernestine, Midland, Va., 60
Gieking, Robert and Margaret, Hollidaysburg, Pa., 50
Harper, Harry and Juanita, Huntertown, Ind., 50
Hostetter, Earl and Pearl, Goshen, Ind., 60
Messick, Obrey and Virginia, Midland, Va., 55
Moon, Dick and Edith, Waterford, Calif., 60
Peck, Paul and Genevieve, Troy, Ohio, 60
Proctor, Chester and Lorene, Shawnee, Kan., 55
Sayler, David and Ruth, Thurmont, Md., 50
Shaffer, Dorothy and Marlin, Manheim, Pa., 55
Smith, Harold and Vera, Waterford, Calif., 65
Stauffer, Graybill and Martha, Mount Joy, Pa., 60
Wolgemuth, Paul and Ruth, Manheim, Pa., 50
Wright, Gene and Nita, Troy, Ohio, 60

Deaths

Accardi, Salvator L., 67, Spring Grove, Pa., June 15
Beehler, Nettie, 90, Wakarusa, Ind., April 28
Beery, Irene L., 86, N. Manchester, Ind., June 17
Bell, Hazel, 85, Fayetteville, W.Va., June 20
Bollinger, Ella, 92, Ephrata, Pa., May 15
Booth, Larry R., 62, Ontario, Calif., April 7
Bradley, Mary, 80, Lebanon, Pa., June 13
Bradshaw, Ruth, 90, Waterford, Calif., March 9
Butt, Beatrice, 88, Shillington, Pa., April 24
Carroll, C.H., 86, Osceola, Mo., April 11
Dagen, Mattilee, 87, Lancaster, Pa., March 21
Darkwood, Gerald, 63, Nappanee, Ind., April 28
Daughtry, Julia, 75, Myerstown, Pa., May 1
Dial, Barney Robert, 102, Yuba City, Calif., June 1
Duncan, Charles Glenn, 86, York, Pa., June 28
Ebersole, Mabel, 106, Ephrata, Pa., June 23
Garst, Wallace B., 81, Roanoke, Va., June 9
Gilmer, Grace L., 87, Harrisonburg, Va., June 26
Grimes, David E., 89, Union Bridge, Md., May 14
Hahn, Keith, 59, Homeworth, Ohio, May 7
Hartman, Io, 84, Wakarusa, Ind., June 17
Hayes, Bernice, 75, Denver, Pa., April 19
Heardt, Robert E., 69, Cando, N.D., May 22
Heindel, George, 81, York, Pa., April 13
Higgins, Milton H., 82, Roaring Spring, Pa., May 23, 1998
Hildebrandt, Philip, 86, York Pa., May 8
Howe, Edna, 79, Waterford, Calif., May 28
Keiper, Mary, 97, Martinsburg, Pa., May 31
La Clair, Ethel, 84, Uniontown, Pa., June 14
Lambert, Violet Esther, 92, Yuba City, Calif., May 29
Lerch, Clifford F., 72, Coopersburg, Pa., March 19
McMurray, Grace, 95, McPherson, Kan., May 26
Miller, Ora Mae, 74, Lewistown, Pa., May 22
Morrison, Rachel, Wooster, Ohio, May 23
Myers, Charles, Jr., 78, Nappanee, Ind., June 27
Neff, LaVerne, 71, Nappanee, Ind., Jan. 20
Neideigh, Dorothy, 92, Rheems, Pa., April 30
Peifer, Diana Ausherman, 47, York, Pa., June 26
Railing, Carrie, 102, Lancaster, Pa., June 3
Root, Roberta J. 80, La Verne, Calif., May 4
Saplak, Emily, 76, Oak Hill, W.Va., June 19
Sheap, Dorothy Pino, 84, Lansing, Mich., March 17
Sheap, Stanley H., 79, Lansing, Mich., May 22
Shenk, Miriam, 74, Elizabethtown, Pa., May 30
Simmers, Lois C., 85, Harrisonburg, Va., June 18
Slifer, Edith S., 85, Perkasie, Pa., Dec. 25
Smith, Elizabeth (Bette), 63, Reading, Pa., May 16
Stouder, Julia, 84, Wakarusa, Ind., June 8
Strom, Rolland, 81, Worthington, Minn., March 23
Umbaugh, Harold, 86, Goshen Ind., July 7
Woodruff, Arthur, 83, Upland, Calif., April 7
Yetter, Samuel, 59, Lewistown, Pa., May 19

Licensings

Baker, Norman E., Pitsburg, Ohio, May 3
Carter, Keith, Pleasant Dale, Decatur, Ind., Dec. 21
Chambers, Scott Allen, Pleasant Dale, Decatur, Ind., March 13
Chambers, Stacie Jo, Pleasant Dale, Decatur, Ind., March 13
Detwiler, Carol Dawn, New Enterprise, Pa., Jan. 30
Edgar, Timothy, Cedar Grove, Rogersville, Tenn., May 23
Gandy, Craig L., Woodgrove, Mich., May 15
Kerr, Thomas J., Christ Our Shepherd, Indianapolis, Ind., Dec. 21
Risser, James K., Lewiston, Minn., April 17
Smucker, Matthew J., Skyridge, Kalamazoo, Mich., May 15

Ordinations

Harvey, Timothy, Dayton, Va., April 20
Jones, Eugene E., Mt. Olivet, Newport, Pa., April 17
Neff, Daniel Allen, Pleasant View, Red Lion, Pa., April 17
Peyton, James, Myersville, Md., May 8
Riege, Yvonne Renee, Troy, Ohio, May 20
Runkle, Dwayne Allen, Pleasant View, Red Lion, Pa.
Scheppard, Carol Ann, Genesis, Putney, Vt., April 17
Spire, Samuel G., Snake Spring Valley, Everett, Pa., Jan. 30
Thomas, Ricky Lane, Peak Creek, Laurel Springs, N.C., May 15

Pastoral placement

Beckner, Dennis, from Locust Grove, New Castle, Ind., to Columbia City, Ind.
Edwards, Emily Shonk, to Cloverdale, Va., director of Christian Nurture
Flory, Brian, from student to Ambler, Pa.
Gauby, Martin, from West Goshen, Goshen, Ind., to Prairie View, Scott City, Kan.
Hess, Stephen, from Pottstown, Pa., to Lititz, Pa., associate pastor
Hooks, Eric, from Robinson, Pa., to Old Furnace, Ridgeley, W.Va.
Hostetter, John, from Coventry, Pottstown, Pa., to Lampeter, Pa.
Malone, Sarah Quinter, from interim to Stonerstown, Saxton, Pa.
Mowen, John, to Fellowship, Martinsburg, W.Va.
Pinkham, David, to Midland, Mich.
Quintrell, Greg, from Ligonier, Pa., to Mathias, W.Va.
Reynolds, Phil, from Beech Grove, Pendleton, Ind., to Mohler, Ephrata, Pa.
Spire, Sam, from New Enterprise, Pa., to Holsinger, New Enterprise, Pa.
Speicher, Jill Keyser, Reading First, Reading, Pa., May 16
Struble, Joy Elizabeth, Lansing, Mich., May 1
Weaver, Herbert, Good Shepherd, Bradenton, Fla., Nov. 8, 1997

Editorial

Here's what attracted me

When I wandered into First Church of the Brethren, Springfield, Ill., about 15 years ago, it was love at first sight. I found the church through its peace witness. I had gotten to know the pastor first when our newspaper did a story on draft counseling and he was involved in that, and then later I worked with Tom Kinzie in peace groups protesting the US war against the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. I kept wondering what kind of a church would allow this radical peace activist to be its pastor, and pictured old hippies with barefoot kids.

Like everything else I wanted to find out about, I decided the paper would do a story on this church. So I went one Sunday morning, and was real surprised to find a congregation of ordinary-looking people there, people of all ages, even some older people. They were all signing something on the back table—it was a petition for a nuclear weapons freeze. I was so impressed that older people were interested in these peace issues too. It was only later I found out that the Church of the Brethren identifies itself as an historic peace church. I had never heard of such a thing. I had been a Christian all my life, and became a peace activist during the Vietnam War, but I didn't know there was a church that put them together.

But it wasn't just the church's politics that attracted me. From the very first moment I felt welcome there. I enjoyed the easy informality of the congregation during the joys and concerns. The next Sunday I brought my young daughters, and they immediately liked the people— even my shy daughter was taken in. It was a community that cared about each other, and soon they cared about me.

So I went back, and back. And gradually I learned that the Church of the Brethren valued the simple life. We had a study group that read Richard Foster's *Celebration of Discipline*, and I read everything I could get my hands on about simple living. I was attracted because my life had been anything but simple. I wanted to slow down and to live it well. I wanted to learn how to live better, and in that congregation I found many good role models for how to live.

So those were the three values that attracted me to the Church of the Brethren: peace, simplicity, and community. They would later be celebrated in our tag lines, "Peacefully. Simply. Together." I think those caught on so quickly because they resonated with our experience. These are the values that make our church stand out from all the rest. And these things that make us differen can help attract others to the Church of the Brethren, a was attracted to it.

Now that I have been in the church awhile, I find tha while many would agree that these are core values, they often fade into the background of our life together. Often they seem more like hobbies we do in our spare time, rather than the main things we're about. I would propose that we look for new ways to put energy behind our core values.

We need to be not only a historic peace church, but a peace church for today and for the future. With the US conducting bombing campaigns and schools erupting in violence, the time for a strong faith witness for peace is now. We must move our peace stance at every opportunit from passive non-participation to active nonviolence. We can become a school for nonviolence. When there is gross injustice, as there was in Kosovo, caring politicians start saying "We have to do something." But they only know o thing to do, just as many in our churches know only one thing to do—get out the guns and bombs. We have to offe them effective alternatives.

Simple living is the core value we hear the least about I suppose it is partly because people who lead simple lives don't talk about it, it's just who they are. And it is partly because we fear the legalistic approach that tore the church apart years ago. Besides, we all feel somewh guilty on this subject. But people are yearning for someone to show them how to live. Whenever they hear us sa we offer "Another way of living" they are eager to know what it is. They know there must be a better way than they are living now. The reason we live simply is becaus Jesus did, and because, just as he did, we seek first the kingdom of God.

Finally, together. Community is the value we Brethren cherish the most. We love one another and we do it well But ours is such a small community. We need to find ne ways to open the doors wider and welcome new strange all the time. The point is we all have sinned and fallen short; there's something wrong with all of us or we wouldn't need God in our lives. We need to lower our admission standards, to welcome the poor of every kind

If our church wants to grow again, it can't be all things all people. It needs a strong identity. It needs to be a peac church, where simplicity and plain living are valued, and where everyone is welcome.—FLETCHER FARRAR

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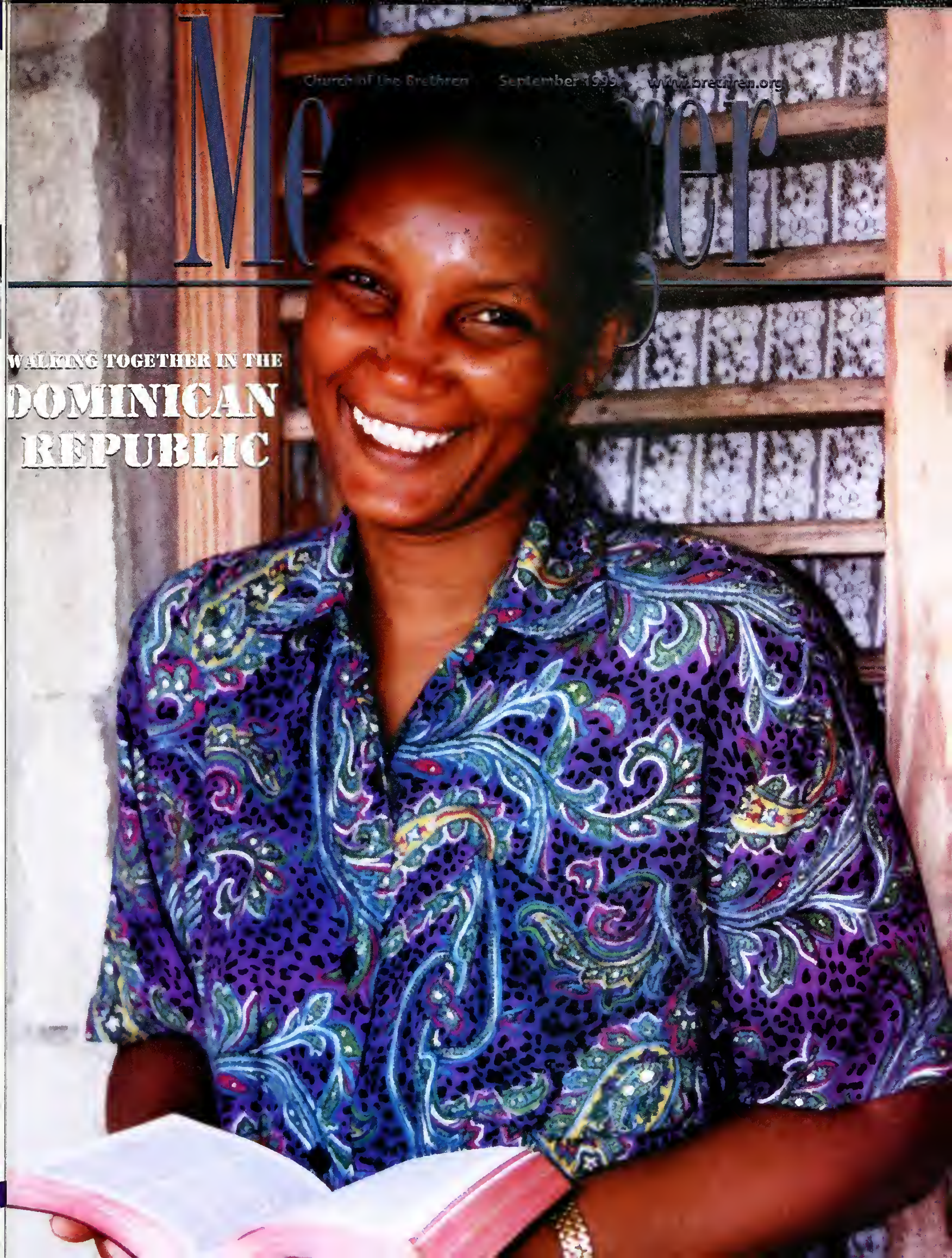

Church of the Brethren September 1999 www.brethren.org

WALKING TOGETHER IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

It all comes together with a Brethren education.

Jenny Stover '97
McPherson College

"A wholistic education is completed outside the walls of the classroom. Through the opportunities supported by the college, I was able to extend myself and grow. I was involved with service projects, choir tours, travel abroad, church camp counseling and various on-campus organizations.

One specific strength of a Brethren college is the smallness of the campus community. Having the opportunity to build close relationships and develop interpersonal skills was an invaluable part of my learning. Now, as I pursue continued education in the social work field, I am grateful for the small-school experience and my multi-faceted education.

I encourage prospective students and parents to explore a Brethren education. With financial aid, a private Brethren college is affordable. Cost no longer drives the decision. It becomes a consideration of value and quality."

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Messenger

Vol. 148, No. 8 September 1999 www.brethren.org

Editor: Fletcher Farrar
News: Nevin Dulabaum
Subscriptions: Vicki Roche
Publisher: Wendy McFadden
Designer: Marianne Sackett

On the cover: Anastasia Santos Tena, a nine-year member of Iglesia de los Hermanos, the Church of the Brethren in the Dominican Republic, reads her Bible regularly as she seeks wisdom in her daily walk with Christ. Her inspiring story, "Living on faith," (page 21) is included in this month's exten- ve coverage of Church of the Brethren mission partnerships the Dominican Republic. The photograph is by Becky aile Crouse, an accomplished photographer and writer in ddition to being mission coordinator.

10

24

Features

10 Walking with the Dominicans

A poor economy and devastation left by Hurricane Georges provide the context for a growing church in the Dominican Republic. Jerry and Becky Baile Crouse, mission coordinators, write of their work as mission coordinators who are "walking with" the Dominicans, to help them learn more about the Church of the Brethren in the US.

13 Special photo insert

An eight-page color center section on the Dominican Republic depicts the devastation of Hurricane Georges, the recovery and rebuilding efforts by the Church of the Brethren, and the fervor of new believers to share their faith. Copies of this section are available from Church of the Brethren Funding, 800-323-8039.

24 Judy Mills Reimer's first year

After one year on the job as executive director of the Church of the Brethren General Board, Judy Mills Reimer reflects on the joys and challenges of the position, discusses how she spends her time, and shares her ideas on how the church finds its vision for the future. A MESSENGER interview, by Fletcher Farrar.

28 Letters, letters

Letters to the editor flowed in this month on a variety of topics, including the ad for McPherson College which included a photo of a student wearing an Army shirt. Another writer objects to the new Ministerial Leadership paper, and a letter describes a fitting camp tribute to Ken Morse.

Departments

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From the Publisher

Recently I did a little research in the Centennial Room at the Highland Avenue church. The Centennial Room is a Sunday school classroom that has been set aside this year to house congregational records. This way the dozens of church members who have been assigned articles about our history can do their research more efficiently. The encyclopedia-type articles are being published in a volume that will be completed just in time for the October 2 event that will be our congregation's 100th birthday party.

I had to take my 10-year-old daughter, Cassidy, with me as I did the research, and I suggested she bring something to amuse herself while I worked my way through the volumes of church council minutes. But somehow the musty smell wafting up from the yellowed pages must have worked its magic on her, because soon she was reading some of the materials herself. Occasionally I would comment on an intriguing item in the minutes, and she in turn would ask me questions about what she was seeing.

There were several papers lying on the table and after a while she picked up the top piece, which turned out to be a church newsletter from 1955. Back then the newsletter was written in microscopic type on a postcard (people had better eyesight back then, I guess). She was thrilled to see that the first words on the page announced that pastor W. Glenn McFadden had just welcomed his first grandchild, Daniel Glenn McFadden . . . who happens to be the father of Cassidy Glenn McFadden.

Because of the nature of the Church of the Brethren, it's not that unusual in many of our congregations for today's children to find their own grandparents in the historical record. But what I think is more important about Cassidy's find is that her great-grandfather (whom she never knew) was also her spiritual ancestor. And each of us, even if we're not related to anyone else at church, can find spiritual grandparents populating the unwritten stories of our congregations.

I say unwritten, because the written record tends to be rather perfunctory. Lots of financial statements. Matter-of-fact reports of decisions made. It's as if this picture of the body shows only the skeleton. But occasionally one catches a glimpse of something more than the bones, and then I can see that the real story has not been been captured in bound volumes.

Eventually I had to close the books and put the files away. Cassidy asked if the Centennial Room was going to exist after our centennial year had come to a close. I didn't think so, I told her. "I think they should keep this room," she responded. "It's fun learning more about our congregation."

One hundred years. The Highland Avenue congregation was born because Brethren Press chose Elgin, Ill., for its home and because other denominational boards and agencies eventually followed suit. In one sense its history is written all across the Church of the Brethren. It's also written in the hearts of the children and adults who today call it their church family.

Wendy McFadden

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Elmer and Averie Brumbaugh

Brumbaughs celebrate 75th anniversary

Elmer and Averie Brumbaugh celebrated their 75th wedding anniversary August 1 at the Kent (Ohio) Church of the Brethren with family and friends. A family celebration was held July 24.

Elmer, 96, and Averie, 93, met in high school in Nelson, Ohio, and were married in 1924 by Elmer's father, the Rev. T.A. Brumbaugh. They have three daughters: Elise Hart of Florida, Esther Domer of Ohio, and June Leadam of California. They have 12 grandchildren, 26 great grandchildren, and 1 great, great grandchild.

The Brumbaughs managed receiving homes for young boys and girls in the 1930s and also served as foster parents for many troubled boys. Elmer was a probation officer for 20 years and worked as a youth counselor for Church Women United in Akron for 20 years. Averie worked with disabled children from 1950 to 1970.

Elmer was ordained to the ministry in 1934. He has served as interim pastor at a number of churches within the Northeast Ohio District, and served as part-time pastor of the Kent Church of the Brethren from 1945 to 1960. He returned there as part-time pastor from 1970 to 1977. Today he is the oldest living pastor in the Northeast Ohio District.

Admired by countless friends gathered over the years, the Brumbaughs enjoy their senior years living in Kent, and continue to worship at the Kent Church of the Brethren.—Rose Hyre

Events all year mark Ephrata centennial

The Ephrata (Pa.) Church of the Brethren is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. Various activities have been scheduled each month, including a traditional service with old forms of worship and clothing, a Brethren Heritage weekend with slide lectures by Dr. Donald Durnbaugh, Alexander Mack impersonations, tours of early Brethren sites, an old-fashioned family picnic, musical programs and Sunday morning messages by former pastors. A September homecoming event featured Guy Wampler and Albert Sauls as speakers.

A 200-page congregational history, *Keeping the Embers Aglow*, was authored by Charles Bieber, pastor emeritus. For more information contact Mary Becker at 717-859-3397.

Internet ministry aids Alzheimer caregivers

Since his wife, Peggy, died of Alzheimer's disease two years ago, Dr. Franklin K. Cassel, a member of the Lititz (Pa.) Church of the Brethren, has devoted much of his time to an Internet ministry to help Alzheimer caregivers.

"I spend hours a day counseling caregivers who share their problems and ask questions," Cassel told the local newspaper. "I give specific counsel by e-mailing a message to an individual mailbox. Or, I can post an answer that goes to everyone who logs onto the site."

Cassel's advice comes from years of caring for his wife, visiting her in a nursing center three times a day. He would help her do exercises, "and many times each day I would make it clear to Peggy that I loved her. And not only by words. I'd bring her flowers as often as I could."

Cassel has produced a book and a video called "Flowers for Peggy" with help for Alzheimer caregivers. Those interested in purchasing the book ($2 including postage) or the video ($7 including postage) may write to Cassell at 3001 Lititz Pike, Lancaster, PA 17606. For information on his Internet ministry, e-mail him at fkcassel@mciworld.com.

Standing together *from left: John and Anita Heatwole, Waynesboro, Va.; Ken Heatwole, Richmond, Va.; and Mike Fike, Morgantown, W.Va.*

Serving on Standing Committee a family tradition

Members of the Heatwole family have been serving the denomination as delegates to Standing Committee for over two decades. John Heatwole and Anita Heatwole from the Waynesboro, Va., congregation served three terms. John's two terms were in 1977-78 and 1994-96; Anita's term was 1982-83. Their son, Ken, from the West Richmond church, Richmond, Va., is the newest member of Standing Committee from Virlina District and will serve from 1999-2001. Son-in-law Mike Fike from the Morgantown, W.Va., congregation has served as a Standing Committee delegate for three terms: a two-year term in the 1980s and is currently in his sixth year of two consecutive three-year terms. In addition, Mike's grandfather, the late Ezra Fike, and his father, the late Galen Fike, also served several terms each as Standing Committee delegates from the West Marva District. Mike's mother, Lorraine, also served one term in the 1970s.

Ken Heatwole and Annual Conference Moderator Emily Mumma are planning to provide a forum for exchange of ideas and feedback on Nov. 12 at the Virlina District Conference. —JULIE M. HOSTETTER

Sixth denomination joins Encyclopedia

Membership of the Brethren Encyclopedia has been expanded to include a sixth denomination — the Conservative Grace Brethren Churches. Established in 1979, the Brethren Encyclopedia was incorporated to "compile, publish, and distribute an encyclopedia covering all aspects of Brethren life, belief, practice, and history and other works of interest...." Other partner denominations include the Church of the Brethren, Old German Baptist Brethren, Dunkard Brethren, the Brethren Church, and Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches.

Work on a fourth encyclopedia volume is currently under way. Set to be released in 2000, this resource will include additions and corrections to the first three volumes (published in 1983-1984), new articles on topics that have emerged since 1980, and a comprehensive index.

BRF marks 40th year with special issue

Brethren Revival Fellowship turns 40 this year and a special issue of *BRF Witness*, the BRF newsletter, focuses on the movement past, present, and future. Nine pages of the 16-page document reflect on the anniversary, incorporated in an article by Harold Martin titled "Brethren Revival Fellowship: A Loyal Concern Movement."

According to the Brethren Encyclopedia, the BRF is "a movement within the Church of the Brethren seeking to call the denomination to a firm stand for the authority of the Scriptures and to an emphasis upon the teachings of the New Testament as they have been historically understood by the Brethren." It started following the 1959 Annual Conference in Ocean Grove, N.J. For more information, contact Harold Martin at 717-225-4184.

Remembering Tomin Harada, Hiroshima's man of peace

Last February I accepted the World Friendship Center's invitation to become a member of the PAX (Peace Ambassador eXchange) 1999 delegation to Japan. High on my expectations was the opportunity to meet once more our good friend Dr. Tomin Harada. Our delegation was to leave July 24. So, it was with great disappointment when at Annual Conference I learned he had died just the week before. He was 87 years of age, and probably the best known and loved physician in Hiroshima. He was also one of our best peace ambassadors.

To those of us who had served at the World Friendship Center, Dr. Harada was a close friend, our personal physician who provided his services without charge, and actual or honorary director of the WFC. To thousands of survivors of the A-bomb, he was their doctor who worked long hours trying to heal their scarred bodies. To Norman Cousins he was a personal friend who, in 1955, accompanied the 25 Japanese hibakusha (A-bomb survivors) to the US for plastic surgery at Sinai Hospital in New York City. To Hiroshima musicians he was cofounder of the Hiroshima Symphonic Orchestra. To sports fans in Hiroshima he was the one who helped organize the Carps professional baseball team because he thought Hiroshima residents deserved some fun after all their anguish. To rose gardeners around the world he was an expert grower who developed such varieties as the Hiroshima and Peace roses.

Even though Dr. Harada had been a physician in the Japanese army in Taiwan, his overriding interest was in peace. His eighth and final book, written in 1998, is entitled, *Moments of Peace.* He was impressed by Dr. Albert Schweitzer and did his best to reflect Schweitzer's respect for all life, be it human or roses. He said he found his "moments of peace" in ministering to the needs of his patients.

When Dr. Harada saw the condition of my old bicycle, he gave me his own, which at 79 years he did not use a great deal. When my wife was suffering from a heart condition, he had us taxied to his home at midnight. When the World Friendship Center needed counsel, he shared freely from his vast experience. Even while his second wife, like the first, was dying of cancer, he remained calm and at peace with life. When he diagnosed himself as having leukopenia, he explained it professionally, and serenely. He died, as he lived, in a "moment of peace." He will be missed by many. But, I am sure he would say the greatest memorial we can give in his memory would be to continue to carry the torch of peace.—D. Eugene Lichty, McPherson, Kan.

Grace E. Groff, *with Robert Lau, composer.*

Groff honored for 50 years as Palmyra organist

In June the Palmyra (Pa.) Church of the Brethren conducted a special Service of Recognition to honor Grace Espenshade Groff's 50 years as assistant organist and organist.

A highlight of the service was the presentation of two organ compositions which the congregation had commissioned for Grace to celebrate the occasion. Composed by Robert Lau, director of music at Mount Calvary Episcopal Church in Camp Hill, Pa., the pieces were based on two beloved Brethren hymns, "On the Radiant Threshold," and "Move in Our Midst." Lau debuted the pieces at the organ.

Groff, who was Annual Conference organist in Wichita, Kan., in 1994, continues as organist at Palmyra.

NEW WINDSOR
CONFERENCE CENTER
a quie e to get th one

Kathleen Campanella

A cloud lifted: *Executive Director Judy Mills Reimer, on one of her frequent visits to New Windsor, Md., with Stan Noffsinger, left, who has been named coordinator of the Brethren Service Center, and Joe Buss, manager of the Conference Center.*

New Windsor gets a new long-term lease on life

The Brethren Service Center at New Windsor, Md., and ministries based there, including Emergency Response/Service Ministries and the New Windsor Conference Center, in August officially were removed from the General Board's "endangered species list." The Board's executive committee has affirmed that the center and its ministries are in the Board's long-term plan.

During the Board's redesign — a major overhaul of ministries and staff configuration that was mostly concluded by July 1997 — questions were raised about whether the Board should maintain more than one large facility. Although no preference was cited between the Brethren Service Center and the General Offices facility in Elgin, Ill., the situation at New Windsor appeared to be more tenuous.

One nonprofit tenant, Heifer Project International, closed its eastern regional office at New Windsor about two years ago, although the closure had nothing to do with the Board's redesign.

Today three additional nonprofit tenants remain — Interchurch Medical Assistance and two former General Board ministries — On Earth Peace Assembly and SERRV International. These latter two agencies have made it clear they intend to explore relocation options.

Furthermore, the Board during redesign also stated that a decision whether to continue or close the New Windsor Conference Center would have to be made by Jan. 1, 2000, based on the center's financial stability.

Nevertheless, IMA continues to be a firm tenant and the Board's ER/SM has many service-related contracts with other relief agencies, such as Church World Service, Lutheran World Relief, and the American Red Cross. And over the past two years the Conference Center's financial status has improved. With all of these variables and uncertainty, and with Jan. 1 looming increasingly closer, there had been much speculation about the future of the New Windsor facility and its ministries.

That ended in an Aug. 13 letter to General Board members, sent by Mary Jo Flory-Steury, Board chair, and Judy Mills Reimer, executive director. In that letter the two state that the Board's executive committee, after studying and consulting, had affirmed that the center would emain open and that the ministries vould stay put.

Furthermore, they announced that n addition to serving as ER/SM nanager, Stan Noffsinger has been amed coordinator of the Brethren ervice Center. While that doesn't nean that all New Windsor-based mployees will report to him, it does nean that Noffsinger will coordinate ll aspects of running the service enter. In this role he will report lirectly to Reimer.

Reimer said that the Board will vork to maintain its current tenants nd will reach out to other agencies o help provide the Service Center vith a sustainable future. "We see his as a proactive stance," Reimer aid. "We started about six months go approaching agencies here and thers to come and join us at this eautiful campus."

Church responds to earthquake and drought

n response to the devastating August earthquake in Turkey, the General Board's Emergency Response/Service Ministries staff at he Brethren Service Center in New Windsor, Md., prepared seven trailer oads of blankets and plastic tarps to e shipped immediately. In addition, he Church of the Brethren nnounced on August 24 that it is ending an initial $25,000 Emergency Disaster Grant to assist an ecumenical humanitarian assistance effort.

Also, in an attempt to better understand the impact of the drought that has affected a large portion of the eastern United States this summer, ER/SM has invited executives and disaster coordinators from Church of the Brethren districts in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, and West Virginia to convene at the Brethren Service Center, New Windsor, Md., on Aug. 26th.

"It is our hope to hear assessments from our district coordinators and to consider ways in which ER/SM and the Brethren Service Center can prepare to respond if called on in the coming months to the wide geographic drought," said Noffsinger.

Two Global Food Crisis grants totaling $30,000 have been allocated by the General Board for work in the Caribbean and the United States —

- $20,000 for emergency food aid for families in the Dominican Republic. The monies will help purchase two months' worth of food supplies for 275 families. The aid will be distributed by COTEDO, the Church of the Brethren's ecumenical partner in the Dominican Republic.
- $10,000 for Harrisburg (Pa.) First Church of the Brethren to assist in the development of a thrift shop to serve the poor. Profits from the shop will support First Church's other community ministries.

A $5,000 grant from the Emergency Disaster Fund has been allocated in response to a tornado that struck Lewiston, Minn., on July 13. Because the disaster was relatively small-scale — $1.8 million in damage including 15 homes beyond repair — the town does not qualify for federal assistance. Nevertheless, only about 60 percent of the damage is covered by insurance. The EDF funds, which were requested by Stan Noffsinger of ER/SM, will be sent to Lewiston's Economic Development Authority for long-term recovery projects. A local bank has promised a matching grant, thus doubling the $5,000.

A grant of up to $20,000 has been allocated from the General Board's Emergency Disaster Fund for the purchase of two disaster recovery vehicles for Emergency Response/Service Ministries. In addition to EDF funds, Mid-Atlantic District will contribute approximately $24,000 for the purchase of these vehicles.

An Emergency Disaster Fund grant of $15,000 was allocated Aug. 12 to provide additional support for the General Board's Emergency Response/Disaster Services project in Haysville, Kan., a town devastated earlier this year by tornadoes.

"Iowa kids" reach out to sister church in inner-city Chicago

For the fifth consecutive year, a workgroup from Panther Creek Church of the Brethren, Adel, Iowa, traveled to Chicago to clean, make repairs, and help lead Vacation Bible School at Douglas Park Church of the Brethren. Seventeen youth and adults, who had raised $1,200 to purchase supplies for the inner-city congregation, participated.

During previous visits, Panther Creek members painted the ceiling, put up railings in front and back basement stairs, replaced walls, fixed doors, changed electrical outlets, remodeled the kitchen, took out chairs, and taught Vacation Bible school, said Jean Keith, Douglas Park co-pastor.

"They have lesson plans and crafts and teaching teams organized before they get here," Keith said. "They really reach out to the kids in the neighborhood, which is truly spreading the good news of the gospel because they reach out in love. The 'Iowa Kids' are known in the neighborhood and bring such energy and enthusiasm that it can't help but give us a boost and revitalize us."

Tubbs return to Nigeria in new mission role

John and Janet Tubbs returned to Nigeria on August 18 for a third two-year term of service through the General Board's Global Mission Partnerships office. Their assignment shifts from teaching and administration at the Mason Technical School in Garkida to a broader assignment as mission coordinators.

They will seek to strengthen relations between the Church of the Brethren and Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria) through greater visibility and access to EYN members, and provide increased support to the handful of Brethren workers in Nigeria. The work that they've been doing at the tech school for the past four years will now be filled by EYN members.

"The broader role is for John and Janet to become more involved in the life of the Nigerian church," said Merv Keeney, Global Mission Partnerships director.

During their summer furlough in the US, the Tubbs attended Annual Conference and talked about the Nigeria mission in Church of the Brethren congregations in Pennsylvania, Indiana, Nebraska, Missouri, and Colorado.

Nigeria church leader meets with newly elected president

Toma Ragnjiya, president of Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (Church of the Brethren in Nigeria) was one of 10 church leaders from northern Nigeria invited to meet with Olusegun Obasanjo, the country's new democratically elected leader, on June 10.

Ragnjiya said the transition from military to civilian rule has gone smoothly and that many Nigerians are pleased "God has given us a dedicated and committed Christian as president." He also has noted the new president's prompt steps against corruption and other actions to begin to deal with the country's problems. The EYN church leader also called for US Brethren to pray for the new Nigerian president.

Staff changes

Nevin Dulabaum has resigned as Newsline editor and as manager of News Services for the General Board, effective Aug. 27. On Sept. 6 he joins Brethren Benefit Trust as manager of marketing and public relations. He will continue working from the Church of the Brethren General Offices in Elgin, Ill.

In addition to the Newsline responsibilities he's held since joining the Board in November 1994, Dulabaum has also served as co-editor of Agenda newsletter for Brethren leaders. From November 1994 to July 1997, he served as managing editor of MESSENGER magazine, and since November 1996 he has served as administrator of www.brethren.org, the denominations Web site.

Walt Wiltscheck, associate pastor at Westminster (Md.) Church of the Brethren, has agreed to serve as Newsline's interim writer/editor until a new manager of news service has been hired by the General Boar

Wiltschek is a former newspaper reporter at the York (Pa.) *Daily Record* who has written articles for Newsline and MESSENGER. He also served on Brethren Press' Communication Team at National Youth Conference 1998 and Annual Conferences 1998 and 1999.

R. Thomas Fralin Jr. has been called as interim executive of Mid-Atlantic District, effective Sept. 1. I August Fralin is retiring from Brownsville (Md.) Church of the Brethren, where he has served for 21 years. Previously he served churches in the Shenandoah and Virlina districts totaling 33 years.

Margie Paris has resigned as coordinator of the Church of the Brethren Yearbook. She then transfers from Brethren Press to the General Board's ministry office where she will serve as secretary to Allen Hansell, ministry director. Paris joined the General Board in 1989 as assistant yearbook coordinator; she was named coordinator in 1996.

Fifth "Dancing" conference draws 150 in Milwaukee

The fifth annual "Dancing" conference sponsored by Brethren Mennonite Council for Lesbian and Gay Concerns, Christian Peacemake Teams, Global Women's Project, Supportive Congregations Network, and Womaen's Caucus was held Jun 25-27 in Milwaukee, Wis. The event drew over 150 participants.

"Leading the Dance: Living the

Church Re-imagined," served as this year's theme for the weekend of worship, fellowship, conversation, and support.

"Worship centered around a rainbow staff of inclusion with litanies proclaiming an extravagant and dancing God," said participant Barb Sayler. "People were encouraged to re-imagine the church as a graced, safe space and to respond to a call to search for truth, to share stories and songs, and to prepare a place where justice and peace can join hands and dance."

Worship also included time for people to share stories of their celebrations and lamentations of the past year, their thoughts and reflections on the present, and their hopes and aspirations for the future, Sayler said.

There were two opportunities for gathering in conversation circles. Topics discussed included a possible Church of the Brethren name change, the in-process merger of the two Mennonite churches, how to include the excluders, talking to children and youth about diversity, and the issues facing open and affirming congregations.

"Participants left the weekend feeling inspired and refreshed as they reimagined a church of unconditional love, inclusiveness, and integrity," Sayler said.
ginia, and Indiana camps.

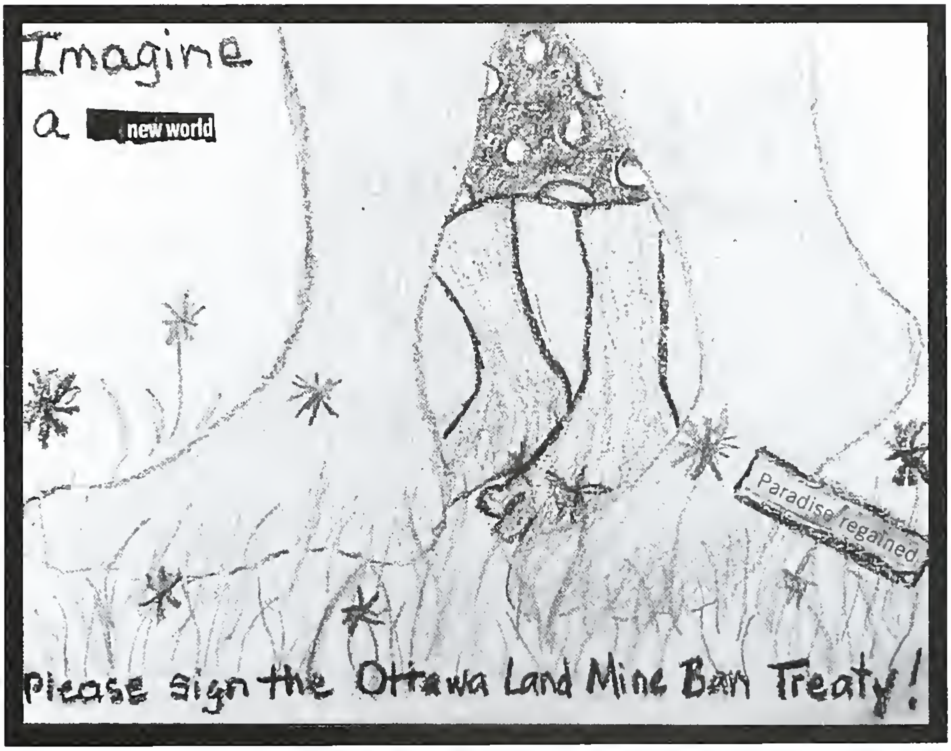
Dan West's daughter joins Heifer Project staff

Janet West Schrock has been called as church and community relations director for Heifer Project International. HPI, a nonprofit development organization that works worldwide to alleviate hunger and poverty through the gift of livestock and training in its care, was founded by Schrock's father, Dan West. West envisioned the organization while serving as a Church of the Brethren relief worker during the Spanish Civil War.

Previously Schrock had served as director of special projects for the National Council of Churches Ecumenical Program for Urban Service/Americorps in New York City. Prior to that she served as director of Brethren Volunteer Service. Her background also includes 28 years in the field of education, including service as a classroom teacher, special needs teacher, and administrator in the United States and abroad.

"I am so pleased to become a part of this organization that was founded by my father over 50 years ago," said Schrock. "I firmly believe, as he did, that peace will come and hunger will go when we, as people of faith, live as one global family."

HPI currently supports over 300 projects in 40 countries, including the US.


Imagine
a new world
Paradise regained
Please sign the Ottawa Land Mine Ban Treaty!

"Imagine a new world...*paradise regained" states this poignant drawing by Deb Morris of Charlottesville, Va.*

Anti-landmine posters: *The 1999 Youth Peace Travel Team's 10-week summer task was to attend Church of the Brethren camps, assisting camp staff and teaching campers about peace. The team decided to focus on the horrors of the more than 100 million landmines that are sowed throughout the world, which kill or maim 26,000 people each year. Instead of asking campers merely to write letters to President Clinton asking him to sign an international landmine treaty, they decided to ask the kids to draw their letters of protest instead. Here is one of the 150 pictures the team acquired during its stops at Illinois, Ohio, Virginia, and Indiana camps.*

WALKING WITH THE DOMINICANS

de la
Iglesia de los Hermanos, de los EE.UU.
Coordinadores de Misión

Dominican mission workers Jerry and Becky Baile Crouse with Stephen, Jacob and Christy.

Mission workers encounter a poor economy and a church rich in spirit

BY JERRY AND BECKY BAILE CROUSE

Becky Baile Crouse

Rebuilding after Hurricane Georges *included local church members digging latrines during a June workcamp. Observing, left to right, are San Luis Pastor Isaias Santos Tena, Mission Coordinator Jerry Crouse, Jacob Crouse, Wayne Sutton of the Miami First Church of the Brethren, and San Jose Pastor Manuel Miguel Tena.*

Tourism and unemployment. Sugar cane and malnutrition. Lush valleys of fruits and vegetables and poverty. Internet access and inadequate electrical supply. Cell phones and no indoor plumbing. The Dominican Republic is a nation of contrasts. The changes taking place in this developing country are immense in their impact on families and the church.

In June of 1999, the Dominican government received $90 million from the World Bank and the Inter-American Bank of Development for the funding of several important development projects to strengthen the country's stability. Another $110 million is expected to flow into the country through other international organizations, with an aim to help reverse the trend of the country paying out more capital than it has received. This money is in addition to the $216 million borrowed by the Dominican government to rebuild roads and bridges following Hurricane Georges, which severely damaged much of the country in the fall of 1998. This borrowed money will increase the already burdensome national debt.

A strike at the end of May by various labor unions called attention to the struggle of the country's working class whose economic buying power continues to be reduced by low wages and high prices. Oxfam International states in its April 1997 report, "Debt repayments have meant health centers without drugs and trained staff, schools without basic teaching equipment, and the collapse of agricultural extension services. . . . For many millions of families in poor villages and urban slums, the daily consequence is that they are unable to maintain health and nutritional standards, and unable to keep their children in school."

A book entitled *Living in Santo Domingo*, published in 1998, estimates that the cost of living in the capital city for a family of five living a US middle-class lifestyle is comparable to that of a couple earning $50,000 dollars a year in a midwestern US city. It is possible, the book adds, for a single person living an austere life to get by on $700 a month ($8,400 a year).

With the per capita income of $1,600 per year, how do working class Dominicans making $8 a day manage to support a household? Some sell things to fellow workers, run some kind of business at home, hold multiple jobs, or are fortunate enough to have a relative who sends monthly checks from abroad.

The Dominican Republic receives $1.1 billion annually from Dominicans living in the US. This income is just above that of the tourism industry, which produces $1 billion in income annually. Large numbers of Dominicans spend years working abroad to earn money and then return to the island to raise their families. The country has a population of 7.9 million inhabitants, while at the same time 1 million Dominicans reside in New York City.

The difficult economic situation of the poor negatively impacts family life. Many women come into the city for the week to work as housekeepers for middle-class families. They earn about $50 to $60 a week and leave their children behind with family members or friends. Others work in assembly plants with long hours and poor wages (see"Living on Faith, page 21). Unemployment stands at 16 percent nationally, but soars up to 80 percent in some areas of the country where jobs are scarce.

When asked for his perspective on the economic issues here, Alcides Collado, director of project planning for COTEDO (Commission of Dominican Ecumenical Work) noted that the Dominican Republic recorded the second highest rate of economic growth in the world during 1998 (7 percent).

"And yet," Collado added, "the economic status of the majority of Dominicans worsened last year." Why? "The economic structures here have never been oriented toward the benefit of our citizens, but rather toward furthering the interests of other nations. The 7 percent growth last year primarily elevated the rich and benefited the capacity and investment of the foreign investors," Collado answered.

Election campaigns are underway for the next president, who will be selected in May of 2000. The Dominican government is a representative democracy modeled after the US system with two chambers, the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. While there are about 20 political parties, only three play a significant role in political life.

(continued on page 21)

WHAT CAN I DO TO SUPPORT THE DOMINICAN BRETHREN?

Pray that God's will and the movement of the Holy Spirit will be evident in the lives of the pastors, members, and US Brethren as they work together for the upbuilding of the church. Pray for the Crouses in their work as mission coordinators. You may contact them c/o Lynx Air SD-DR, P.O. Box 407052, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33340, tel. & fax: 809-560-6142, e-mail: gerald.crouse@codetel.net.do.

Seek to be one in Spirit with our Dominican sisters and brothers by being centered in Christ, a Bible reader, constant in prayer, active in your congregation, a doer of the will of God, and by sharing the good news of Jesus Christ and His love with others in your community.

Develop a mutual relationship with some of the Dominican Brethren through participation in a workcamp or by supporting someone who can come to work alongside them in disaster response, church building, or other projects. Volunteer to host Dominican church members when they have the opportunity to visit the US. Read about developing mission partnerships and interdependence with sister churches of other cultures.

Advocate for structural changes in the world economy that will benefit the poor. Read *The Globalization of Hope,* recently published by the Ecumenical Program on Central America and the Caribbean, which suggests numerous ways of working for economic justice for the poor in the region. Order from EPICA, 1470 Irving Street, NW, Washington, DC 20010, tel. 202-332-0292, e-mail: epica@igc.apc.org.

Learn more about the Dominican Republic and its history. Check out Internet Websites. Read the novel *In the Time of the Butterflies* by Julia Alvarez, which vividly describes life during the 30-year dictatorship of Trujillo.

Support the General Board mission work in the Dominican Republic through your regular prayers and financial gifts. Contact the office of Global Mission Partnerships at 800-323-8039 for more information.

Building the Church of the Brethren in the Dominican Republic

MITS
SOLO DIOS SABE

IGLESIA DE LOS HERMANOS

PRODUCED BY HOWARD E. ROYER

DOMINICAN
REPUBLIC
HAITI
Santo Domingo

Hurricane Georges permanently altered the landscape

'THE GOSPEL PREACHED WITH PRACTICE'

Upon losing their home to Georges, a San Luis family took refuge in Prince of Peace Church. Impressed by such hospitality, they joined the church. This spring they moved into this new home and now are helping a neighbor build a house.

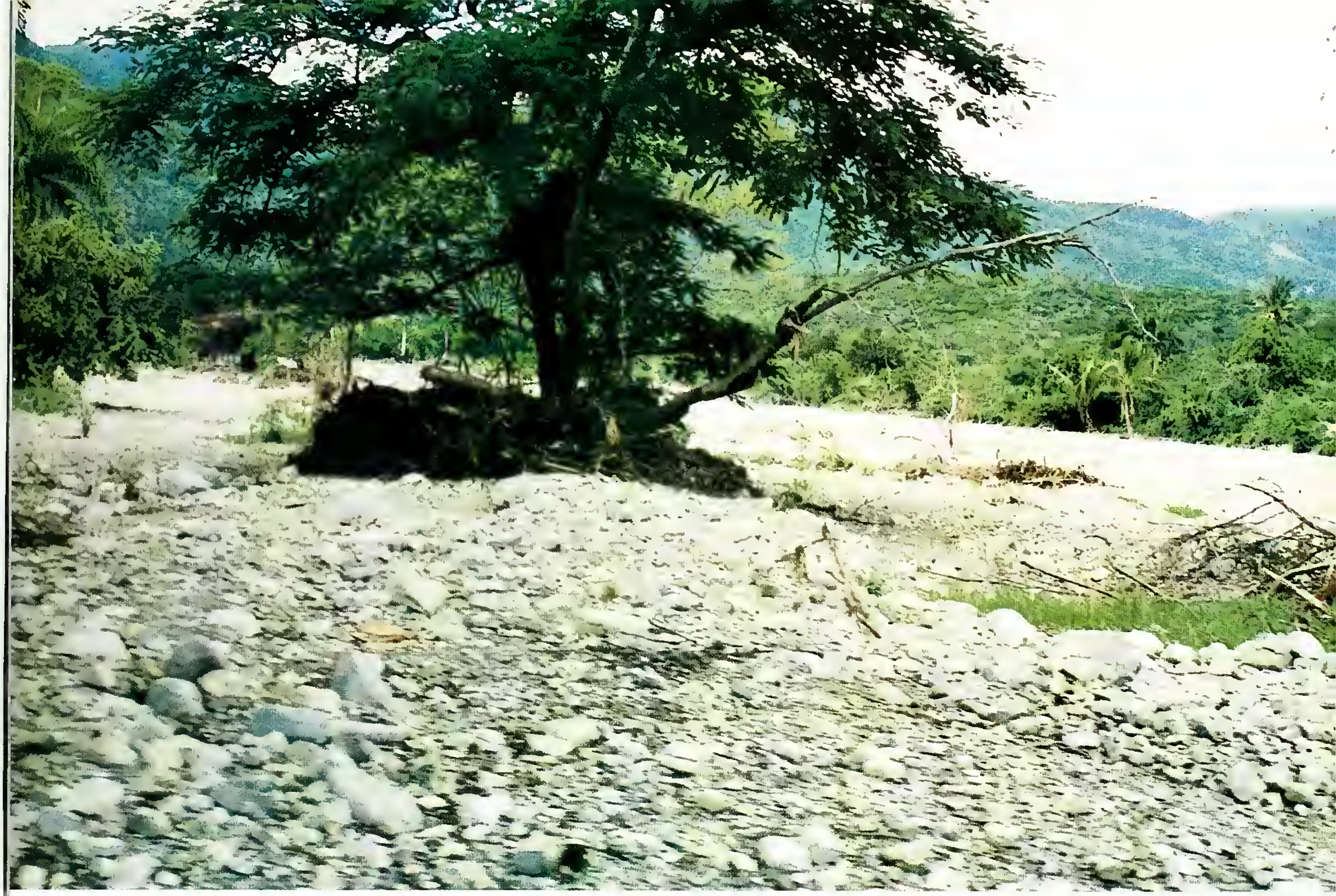
David Radcliff

Cover photos. Center and right (second from top), David Radcliff. Others, Jeff Leard.

When Hurricane Georges unleashed its fury on the Caribbean in September 1998, virtually every community on the Dominican Republic's lower side suffered drastic losses. Whole towns and barrios were wiped out, crops ravaged, top soil washed away, even the courses of rivers altered. Dominicans were devastated economically and nutritionally.

For a host of Brethren communities—San Juan, Azua, Viajama, Tabara Abajo, Paraiso—recovery from the wind and floods has been a long haul. Residents want to distance themselves from normally placid streams they have seen turned into rampaging rivers. The entire village of Viajama is seeking to relocate to higher ground 10 kilometers away.

To hasten recovery from the hurricane in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, the Church of the Brethren Emergency Disaster Fund and Global Food Crisis Fund have issued grants of a third of a million dollars. Iglesia de los Hermanos has been strengthened by this support of the wider church. The rebuilding work of Dominican Brethren has helped draw new members, neighbors moved by what Luis Mariano Ogando, president of the Conference of Churches Board, describes as "the gospel preached with practice."



One of the most devastating long-term effects of Hurricane Georges was to wash away tillable soil and leave only fields of brush and stone.

Becky Baile Crouse

David Sollenberger

At Azua, a worker helps stake out foundations for 32 houses.

David Sollenberger

Each future occupant family is required to assist with the construction.

David Radcliff

When the hurricane destroyed the sugar cane plant

Championing the cause of Dominicans of Haitian descent

JUSTICE IN AND BEYOND THE BATEYES

Wayne Sutton

Providing sugar cane communities with medical care for two years is Dr. Hilcias Ricardo of the Peniel fellowship.

The hot and dirty work of cutting and processing sugar cane in the Dominican Republic has fallen to Haitian immigrants. Cane workers and their families have been housed on government-owned plantations in communities called bateyes (pronouced bataiyas). But now as the sugar industry moves toward privatization, the government is selling its property and leaving the bateyes without schools and health services.

Compounding the plight of the bateyes and Haitian laborers further are the crop and job losses suffered from the hurricane. One sugar mill that closed left 12,000 laborers unemployed.

Moreover, Dominicans of Haitian descent often lack proof of legal residency. Many speak Creole. Outside the bateyes, they are mistrusted and abused.

Iglesia de los Hermanos embraces Dominican Haitians and has three churches that worship in Creole. It works with COTEDO, the Commission of Dominican Ecumenical Work, in providing food and medical assistance. Its ministry in the bateyes testifies to the power of the gospel to transcend race, language, and culture.

David Radcliff

At Viajama, Georges left this schoolyard a rock gar

or Isaias Santos Tena found many in his church without a means of livelihood.

stream converged with three other streams to become a mighty torrent.

David Radcliff

Children and youth of the church in the bateye of San Jose.

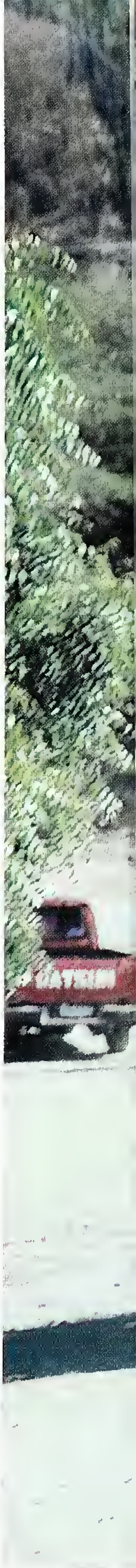
David Radcliff

...OPE DE PAZ
ESTAN BIENVENIDOS

The Crouses greet Prince of Peace members at San Luis.

David Radcliff

Mission in the making—Jerry Crouse puts listening first.



David Radcliff

In Christ, believers are drawn together spiritually as

A DWELLING PLACE FOR GOD

Becky Baile Crouse

ENIDOS
AMBLEA ANUAL
OS HERMANOS
8VA

Youth have a key role in the church's annual assembly.

To make disciples is the expressed goal of Iglesia de los Hermanos, a task that engages both pastors and laity in preaching the gospel, teaching the word, and glorifying Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Youth especially bring vigor to the mission enterprise. A typical congregation holds special youth services on Saturday night. But in a number of congregations the youth groups do not just settle for people coming to the church; the youth mobilize outreach missions to neighboring towns, there to fan out in groups to conduct open-air services on several streets simultaneously.

As the churches grow, larger and improved meetingplaces are needed, and the Church of the Brethren in the US and Puerto Rico has helped Dominicans build 10 new places of worship. Yet while new members and new buildings and new outposts of service and witness are strategic, what excites the Dominicans most is that, as the apostle Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus (2:22), they are being "built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God."

n a mission: youth from True Life church in Tabara Abajo take their witness to outlying towns.

Earl K. Ziegler

Newly constructed La Vida Verdadera Church at Tabara Abajo.

Earl K. Ziegler

IGLESIA DE LOS HN
La. Vid Verdadera
Tabara Abajo

Pastor Manuel Cuevas at the original church at Tabara Abajo.

Earl K. Ziegler

The two-story church at Guaricanos was dedicated in 1998.

Becky Baile Crouse

Luis Mariano Ogando baptizing at Chalona preaching point.

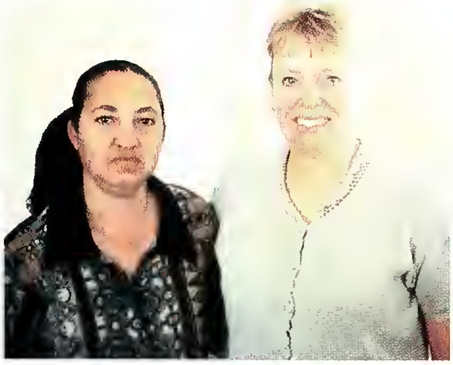
Snavely's
HERSHEY AREA
HELP
CROP
STOP
HUNGER
CROP WALK

Jeff Leard

Volunteers from states, Puerto Rico have helped build 10 new churches.

To work and walk with others is to receive from them

MISSION FROM THE HEART



Jerry Crouse

Coworkers: Former moderator and Guaricanos pastor Angelica Beriguette and mission staff Becky Baile Crouse.

Brethren in the US and Puerto Rico have much to receive from their young partners in mission. To work and walk with sisters and brothers in the Dominican Republic is to receive from them, person to person and heart to heart.

The encounters come in diverse ways: evangelistic outreach, ministry training, exchange visits, medical services, food distribution, disaster cleanup, reconstruction and, foremost, vibrant worship. All who give attest freely and joyously to how much they have been given in return.

This is the hallmark of world mission today.

Harriet Finney

Executive Board and Brethren Academy review ministry training plans.

(continued from page 12)

Corruption and catering to the rich continues to be a plague on the road to true democratization. Though there is evidence of a growing middle class, the majority of the population continues to struggle for basic food supplies, and many live in one-room shacks without running water or electricity. Access to clean drinking water continues to be a problem in many areas of the country. Violence and robberies are on the rise.

Evidence of the contrast between the rich and the poor are the many new US fast-food chain restaurants that have sprung up around the city during the past 5 years. One can buy a "combo" meal for about $5, which would be two thirds of a daily wage for the typical Dominican laborer.

The majority of the members of the Church of the Brethren in the Dominican Republic are working class people who struggle to survive in their current economic situation. Pastor Luis (Miguel) Ogando, president of the Conference of Churches, is a high school English teacher. He pastors the Luz y Verdad church in San Juan and also serves a preaching point in the mountains in the community of Chalona. His wife, Maria, has sought to supplement the family income by opening a small store where she sells cookware. The couple works hard to provide for their family of five children ages 12 through 18.

Poor standards of education and inadequate housing and health care plague many of the communities where Church of the Brethren congregations have begun during the past 20 years.

As "mission coordinators," we were called by the General Board at the request of the Dominican churches to have someone from the US church come to walk with them and help them learn more about the

(continued on page 22)

LIVING ON FAITH

Following Hurricane Georges on September 22, 1998, Anastasia Santos Tena, received from an international human rights organization a loan of 5,000 pesos (equivalent to $300) to start a small business.

Anastasia, like many other women living in the Haitian sugar cane community of San Luis, needed additional income to help support her family. When she couldn't find a suitable business to start, the pressing needs of her family quickly swallowed up the loan.

Unemployment is high in this community northeast of Santo Domingo, which normally has been employed in the nearby sugar cane factory. The Dominican government is privatizing the sugar industry and trying to sell the San Luis sugar cane factory, which has been closed since the hurricane.

In April, Anastasia began work in a clothing factory about one hour from her home to try to repay the loan. She makes 10 pesos (about 60 cents) an hour doing quality control for shirts and pants bound for the United States.

"I started work because it was a difficult time. My husband is a pastor of the Church of the Brethren here and we were trying to live on his pay of about 2,700 pesos a month. Many times when it was time to receive his pay, we already owed all the money to the stores. My children needed shoes, clothes, and some days we didn't have enough food for three meals a day so we'd just eat one meal," Anastasia said.

Anastasia rises about 5 a.m. and leaves for work at 6 a.m. Some days she works a 12-hour shift with three 10-minute breaks and a half hour for lunch. Other days she works for 8 hours. Because she doesn't own a vehicle, Anastasia spends 15 pesos a day ($1) to travel to and from the factory. Sometimes if she buys a hot lunch or something to drink, she is left with only 40 or 50 pesos (about $3) to show for her efforts.

From December through April, the family housed four children of an ill cousin including one eight-month-old baby. They received no additional income to assist with the needs of these children. Anastasia also left behind her own four children, ages 11 to 20. The older children and her sister cared for the younger ones while she was away. "The children suffer a lot because I am not there," she said.

Anastasia and her family have been members of the Church of the Brethren for 9 years. When she was able to be at home, Anastasia was present at the church most evenings during the week for the various worship services. "The church people are concerned about my work because of the stress on our family but they understand because their situations are similar," she said.

When asked how the family survives during such difficult times, she said, "We live on faith." —Becky Baile Crouse

Becky Baile Crouse

While she is a at work *Anastasia Santos Tena, right, has to leave children behind. Pictured are her cousin's daughter Loyda, 15, and her daughters Llania, 11, and Noemi, 14.*

Becky Ball-Crouse

The Crouses visit *each of the 19 congregations and new church projects. Here they are pictured with members of the Azua Sunday school.*

Church of the Brethren. When the house we planned to rent fell through after an initial visit in November, church and ecumenical leadership located a house and facilitated the shipment of our belongings, which arrived March 3.

Two days after we arrived Jan. 31, we "camped out" in our Santo Domingo home with mats on the floor and a cooler for our refrigerator. On Feb. 1 Steve, 10, and Jacob, 8, began attending an English-speaking school, where they have learned to know children from all around the world. Christy, 4, has been a joyful ambassador for Christ as she has encountered her new Spanish-speaking neighbors and church friends.

Our living room has been converted into an office. We have learned to drive the General Board car in congested city traffic and on treacherous country roads. We also use the public taxis (5-passenger cars packed with 7 people), guaguas (private 30-passenger buses representing various levels of repair, comfort, and safety) and city buses. As we have traveled to visit the 19 churches and preaching points, it is no surprise that the primary health concern for missionaries today is accidents, not diseases.

Having lived in the Dominican Republic for nearly 6 months, we have spent considerable time in building relationships. We have visited the churches and projects to learn to know the Dominican Brethren and listen to their stories of faith. Our work has ranged from hosting US church leaders and workcampers, to handling regular communication and translation of letters and paperwork between US and Dominican churches, to helping facilitate proposals for development and leadership training. We attend regular meetings of the conference of churches and are working in partnership with the Dominican church, as leaders share dreams and visions for the future.

Though many of the Dominican Brethren have roots in other Christian traditions, a strong theological education program begun in 1994 under the leadership of Marcos Inhauser and Milciades Mendez has laid a solid foundation for the future of the church. Pastors and members alike can articulate the basic beliefs of the church and use stories such as that of Brethren pacifist John Naas in their discussion of the church's peace witness.

When asked how the local community recognizes members of the church, brother Ogando replied, "By the manner of their living," a phrase well-known to US Brethren. The first group of pastors will complete their theological training this December under the leadership of interim coordinator Guillermo Encarnacion, pastor of Alpha and Omega Church of the Brethren in Lancaster, Pa.

Many of the Dominican churches have services throughout the week for the children, youth, women, and men. They have active evangelism ministries, including weekly services in the homes of members where neighbors and friends are welcomed to come and praise God and find out more about the church. They have actively sought to share in emergency relief with food aid and disaster response building projects in their communities following Hurricane Georges.

During a June workcamp, 20 members of the San Luis church traveled with US workcampers to the sugar cane community of Sabana Grande de Boya to learn more about the ministry of Dr. Hilcias Ricardo, a member of Peniel Church of the Brethren (Santo Domingo), working in this area. Dr. Ricardo had arranged for the group to hold a worship service in one of the communities where there are few active churches. About 50 people from the community participated in the worship, held on a concrete slab that used to be homes which were destroyed by the hurricane.

The Nuevo Renacer (New Rebirth) congregation in Los Toros has a monthly Saturday evening worship in the street, which is attractive to the youth in the community. It is attended by more than 200 persons. The music and worship in the Dominican churches reflects the lively Latin culture, as songs of faith are accompanied with instruments including bongos, keyboards, guiras, and tambourines. The Dominican Brethren have much to teach US Brethren through the forthright way in which they live and share their faith.

At the invitation of two US Church of the Brethren camps (Ithiel in Florida and Bethel in Virginia), two of the Dominican youth leaders served on their staffs this summer and attended Annual Conference in Milwaukee.

During its first 20 years, as the Dominican church has grown and developed, it has relied heavily on the US church for leadership training and financial resources. Ten church buildings have been constructed through generous giving of time and money by US Brethren in partnership with local congregations. The Dominican church is deeply grateful for this support.

Working side by side as brothers and sisters in Christ will mean continuing to wrestle with issues of self-reliance and interdependence as members of the faith community. Exploring these issues in the context of the current economic and political situation of the country will be important in coming years as the Dominican and US Brethren walk the road of faith together.

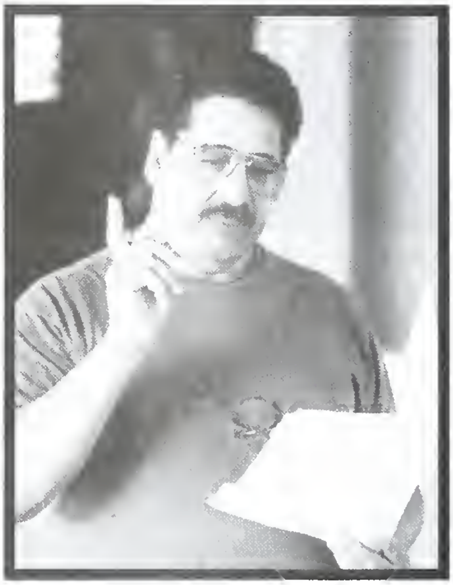
THE HEALING POWER OF FORGIVENESS

by Guillermo Encarnacion

In the Gospel of Luke, chapter 6, verses 27-36, we find a sublime teaching given to us by our Lord Jesus Christ: "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who mistreat you..." (Today's English Version).

Also, according to the Apostle Paul, love defeats evil and hatred (Romans 12:20-21). "Do not let evil defeat you; instead, conquer evil with good" (TEV).

When I was returning from my most recent trip to the Dominican Republic in April, I saw a familiar face in the airport in Santo Domingo. This man was carrying a Bible under his arm. During the flight to San Juan, Puerto Rico, I kept thinking and trying to remember who he was, because his face reminded me of a military officer at Beata Island Prison, where I had stayed as a political prisoner 43 years ago.



Guillermo Encarnacion

When we arrived in San Juan and were going through immigration, I mentioned to him, "I see that you carry a Bible so you seem to be a Christian and your face is so familiar, but it reminded me of a prison guard I knew during Trujillo's dictatorship." Looking at me, he said that he was a pastor in Chicago and I told him that I was a pastor in Lancaster, Pa.

All of a sudden, all the past memories came flooding into the present. This man was the man who, as a military officer, had mistreated me in the prison.

He apologized for his past behavior, mentioning that now he is a new person in Christ. We embraced each other and wept. We could see the Word of God becoming a reality in our lives. "So, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away" (II Cor. 5:17).

Our plan to meet later and exchange telephone numbers and addresses at the luggage pickup was not possible because I was accompanying Pilar de Oleo, the mother of a member at Alpha and Omega Church of the Brethren, Lancaster, Pa., who was in the process of getting her permanent residency. When we had finished with this matter, all the other passengers had left the customs office.

This experience was a blessing from God for me. It made me aware that my heart is filled with the power of forgiveness.

Guillermo Encarnacion is an ordained minister in the Church of the Brethren and pastor of the Alpha and Omega Church of the Brethren in Lancaster, Pa. He began as interim coordinator of theological education in the Dominican Republic in April 1999. Guillermo is a native of the Dominican Republic and was imprisoned from 1957 to 1959 at Beata Island Prison for participating in the student resistance movement against the Trujillo dictatorship. He is married to Gladys Montero Encarnacion. They have five children and three grandchildren.

The first year on the job

Judy Mills Reimer reflects on life as executive director

F & **J**
Fletcher Farrar
Judy Mills Reimer

Nevin Dulabaum

Judy Mills Reimer began as executive director of the Church of the Brethren General Board in June, 1998. Before that she had served as chair of the General Board (1988-90) and as Annual Conference moderator (1995). A 1994 graduate of Bethany Theological Seminary, she is an ordained minister and was founding pastor of Smith Mountain Lake Church of the Brethren Fellowship (1996-98). She was a schoolteacher from 1965 to 1976, then worked at Harris Office Furniture, Roanoke, Va., which she still owns with her husband, George.

When she came to the executive director position, the General Board organization had already been downsized, streamlined, and "redesigned" a year before. Yet she was the first permanent staff executive hired to give shape to the new structure. After her first year on the job, she reflects on the challenges and opportunities, the joys and difficulties she has faced. She was interviewed by Fletcher Farrar, editor of MESSENGER, on August 12.

F You had said your approach has been to listen, listen, listen. You meet with your staff Leadership Team once a month, and you've been going to New Windsor, Md., to meet with the staff there once a month. At General Board meetings you listen as well. What have you heard?

J

I try to listen with my eyes and ears. When I came on this job there was still a lot of grieving about the old, and a lot of questions about what the new meant. I would ask someone who lived through the process of new design, how is it supposed to be working? Everybody had a different picture, and nobody could clarify that this was exactly what the board wanted to happen.

I think that my listening skills, and coming around the table and sharing with each other, has been an important part of learning what is working and what is not working. We have to function professionally, and be good stewards of God's time and money, while at the same time trying to live into what the new design calls teamwork. While we work as a team, we had to have the buck stop somewhere. The responsibility for that buck is in the executive director's office.

F A key part of the new staff structure is the Congregational Life Team, which deploys General Board staff members around the country to work with congregations. How is that program working?

J

There has been joy and excitement and frustration around the question of what does it mean to have a Congregational Life Team. They've been searching themselves to put skin on their structure. The congregations and the districts are responding beautifully. They're hungry for this. We all know that our districts and our national ministries exist because of our congregations. Without those of us who sit in the pew every Sunday, there would be no need for the wider organization.

In consultation with the director of Congregational Life Ministries, we will be increasing some of our staff to full time who have been half time. We're shifting some dollars to make more time available to the congregations.

F So the CLT program is working?

J

The new design has only had this one year because I've only been on the job one year. I don't care who would be wearing this hat, that would be the case. For me we've only been in this new design for one year. Yes, there are all kinds of questions that continue, but I don't think it is fair to say immediately that changes are needed. The board had just made its decision [to create Congregational

Life Teams] when I came on. I think they would have put me out on a limb and sawed it off if I had said we're not going to do it this way.

F In mid-August you announced that Stan Noffsinger, director of Emergency Response/Service Ministries, would also serve as coordinator of the Brethren Service Center at New Windsor, Md. At the same time you announced that New Windsor would "no longer be living under a cloud" of a threat to close the center after Jan. 1, 2000 (See News on page 6.) Does this move signal more such decisive actions in the future? Will your listening move into a more vocal role? Is it time to speak up more?

J

I'm not going to stop listening. But I'm now articulating very clearly to the Executive Committee some of the tweaking that I think needs to be done to the new design. I'm not at liberty to say all the things that I've already shared with them. Of course we still work in that land of tension of what is the executive director's responsibility and what is the board's responsibility. I do believe that the executive director is the person that the board hires, and all other staff is accountable to the executive director.

F Often boards have a tendency to get into micro-managing, so you and the General Board have worked on defining roles, through a workshop last March and another planned for this year's October meeting. It takes a while for the new person on the block to come in and establish her authority. How is your relationship with the board?

J

I really appreciate the board. I was a member of the General Board for five years myself. I think how we're working at our relationship is through a wonderful chair and executive committee. The board's responsibility is to look at the bigger picture, to help set the policies, to give the parameters of the budget, and leave it to the staff to work out the details.

F Annual Conference has asked its five agencies, including the General Board, to collaborate in the work of the church A lot of your time and energy goes into the collaboration effort. How's it going?

J

I don't really know how it's going. I am committed to collaboration because I was called under that new umbrella language. It sounds like a good idea, but working at it is very hard. We are trying to give the image that we are all working together. Each of us has a different definition of what the church has called us to do. What does it mean for boundaries? Well, it is time-consuming and it takes lots of energy, I'd better stop there.

Within the General Board programs, I'm trying to use different words, which are "cooperating creatively." We can talk about working collaboratively, and everybody lays it on the table, and everybody shakes hands and walks away. But I feel that our energy would be better used if we were looking at creative ways of working together. With collaboration I have the image of the fist at each other. I'm telling you my feelings. I would give us all an A-plus for trying, really trying, to do what the church has asked us to do as far as working together.

I hear a lot of historical kinds of things brought up during collaboration meetings. It makes it very difficult for the General Board. It would be better if we could all start from the here and the now, and creatively move forward from this point. It will never go back to what it was before. So how can we work together, within the General Board, and with all the different agencies, and stop whining over what was done in the past?

F As executive director, you are responsible for managing a General Board staff of 106 employees. You have said you are trying to improve salaries as well as ease the transition into a new medical insurance plan. Yet you acknowledges that staff morale continues to be an issue. What have you done to improve employee relations?

J

I didn't get off the cabbage boat yesterday. I know that I am working within a system. A lot of the problem was that people were just still angry over this new design, and things being done differently. I know that we are excellent employers. I also know that we have people here who find it very comfortable just to gripe.

I work at managing by walking the halls, being a presence as much as possible here, keeping my door open. When I have deadlines or if someone is with me, the door is closed. But I try to eat lunch with people in the building. I try to have a personal interest, to try to understand what their jobs are and what they're doing. I try to show an appreciation for what people are doing. When someone hears a thank you from me it comes from my heart.

F You have tried to be accessible to the staff, but you are often away from the office. You represented the church at the World Council of Churches Assembly in Harare, Zimbabwe last December and you will attend a World Council meeting in Geneva, Switzerland this month. You recently helped to lead a youth event at Camp Swatara and you are preaching a revival in September. Despite all this, you say you were criticized for not attending a large district event last year, to which you had not even been specifically invited but it was assumed you would come because your predecessors had attended. How do you balance your time and priorities?

J

It has been a personal goal of mine to put skin on the General Board. And to do that is to be accessible to the people in the pew. I'm doing a revival at the end of September that has been on my calendar for three years. To be gone a week is not the best for working at the employee relationship. But I do think the executive director must be available and be seen in congregations and at district functions.

I will be going to a district conference at Northern Indiana. I'll be going to the Atlantic Northeast auction. Every time I go to Virginia I go to a congregation to worship on Sunday. Lot's of times I don't even tell them I'm coming because I want to be just sitting in the pew. I have affirmed for years that we're all on level ground at the foot of the cross.

The General Board has been given the responsibility by the church to be the ecumenical arm. So that takes lots of time and energy.

Nevin Dulabaum

Judy Mills Reimer *and her husband, George, received a hearty welcome to Elgin from the General Board staff.*

F Are there people you go to for counsel on where to put your priorities?

J

The executive committee is my personnel committee. They're the ones who are really encouraging me to stay on top of balance and boundaries. Each meeting I give them a pretty strong update of how I'm spending my time. They give me guidance out of that. I listen to their voices, but I still feel that I am making the decisions.

F Overall how do you feel that it's going with management of your time? Is it working?

J

I'm more energized beginning the second year than I was the first year. My energy was high the first year. But I have been through that questioning period. It came about two-thirds to three-fourths of the way through that first year. I said to myself, 'What in the world have you done? You dummy.' I worked through that. I really do get up in the morning and I say, 'Okay God, you've called me to this position. What are we going to do today?' That keeps me energized.

I try to stay focused on seeking to be faithful to God's spirit. And I'm just determined that nobody's going to break my faith-spirit. They're just not. I feel so strongly that I have been called by God through the General Board to be at the place where I am right now. That doesn't mean I'll be here forever. But I can look back and see how God prepared me to be here. So I'm not going to allow people to break my spirit.

F Your business skills have been helpful with the finances, which seem to be improving, not only from the expense side, but from the income side as well. Is that a true perception?

J

I feel positive about the church's finances. But I state that with a caution. Ken Neher (director of funding) and I talk about this often, because he is Mr. Sunshine, and I do celebrate with him when he says that we must be doing something right. But I also come out of a marketing understanding that we must keep our story before our people, because there are others out telling their story.

When the figures look good, I think it is a tribute to our treasurer and finance department, and the way that they listened to the General Board's guideline of increasing reserves to $2 million, because they had gone way under that. It takes hard work, because you have to let some things go in order to increase reserves.

F For the past two years, around Memorial Day, you have gone on a spiritual retreat at the Trappist monastery in Kentucky where Thomas Merton lived. What did you do on your retreat?

J

When I went on the retreat in May, 1998, it was a time of preparation for me before coming to this position. This May I went again, and I have plans to go back each of the next two years. I need this time of silence. I go for one hour each day to Sister Danielle, who is the spiritual director there. I spend time in reading scripture, fasting, prayer, and walking in the woods. I go to worship with the monks several times a day as they sing through the 150 Psalms. I work at goals for my personal and spiritual life, but also at goals for this calling as the executive director of the General Board.

F You like to spend time with your family, but your job can be hard on family life. How's that going?

J

George and I are either face to face daily or together by phone daily. My family has not been here (in Elgin) much. But I will be extending my New Windsor time soon to be in Roanoke because our company, Harris Office Furniture, comes to our home. We live on Smith Mountain Lake, in a home that has been in my family since 1965, which we plan to be our retirement home. All of our employees and their families will come for a summer picnic. It's an annual tradition.

Every year since 1984 when my mother died, George and I host my mother's family— her siblings, and all of our cousins and our cousins' children. On the Sunday after Thanksgiving we have about 60 people in our home. We sit down in the family room after we enjoy a meal together, and we just bring each other up to date on what has happened. I will go back to Virginia each year for that.

F Please tell us about your grandchild.

J

He is Bailey Gerhard Reimer and he was born Dec. 20, 1998 to our son Troy and his wife Chris. They live in Roanoke, Va. It was sad to realize that I would have a grandchild in Virginia while I'm in Illinois, but grandparents live through this all the time. It's probably good for me to have some distance. But fortunately, when I do get to Virginia, I am able to spend some time with him. Most of the time I even babysit, so I can have that all-inclusive time of being with him constantly.

F Let's finish by talking about your vision for the future. The process of getting the board to come up with its vision with the staff is one thing. But you have your own personal vision. Can you share more about what you see the church becoming? What are your goals and visions?

J

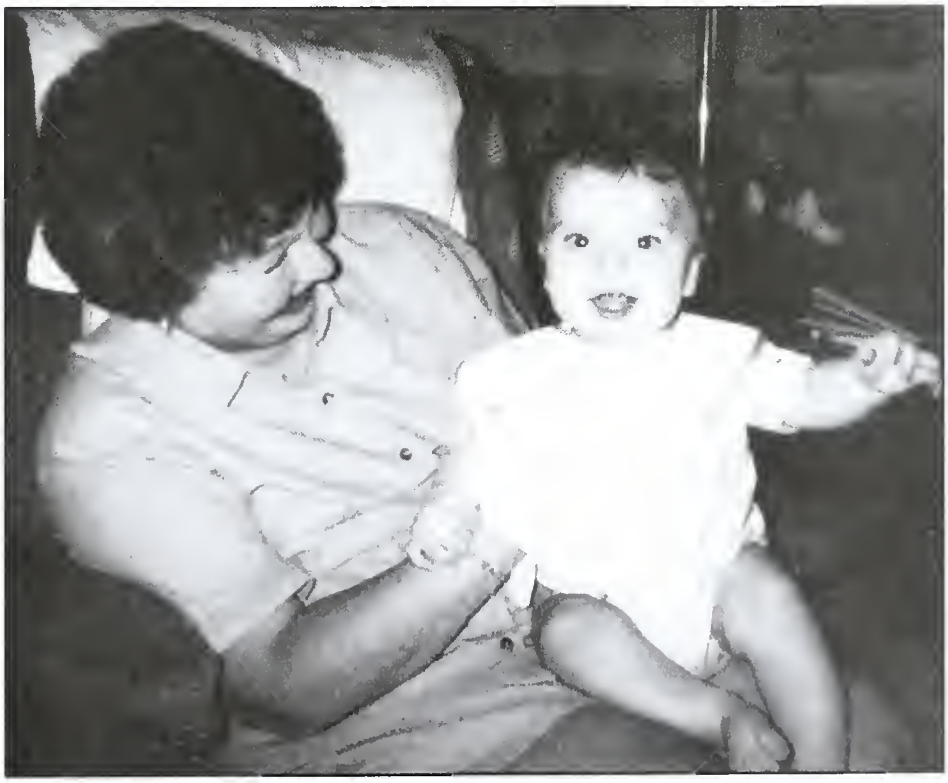
My goal is that we will continue with a sense of renewal to learn what it means for us to be a simple people, what it means for us to be a service people, what it means for us to wash the feet of others. We must give strength to each other out of our understanding of the New Testament, and live into our ordinances of baptism and anointing. We must seek to resolve our conflicts and to live into the reality that 'war is sin.' We must build upon our heritage going into the 21st century. For me that is what it means for us to continue the work of Jesus, peacefully, simply, together.

I keep hearing people say, 'Well that's just a tagline.' It's not just a tagline, It's a vision for us to work together.

F Yes, we're going to determine together what it means. But you're not quite ready to say here's what it means to me?

J

That IS what it means to me. I think one of the reasons I was hired for this responsibility is my willingness to work as a team. The shared vision has to be shared. If I'm out running the flag, then it's a Judy vision. And I don't work out of that mentality. I work out of us working together, that we are together moving into this vision. I don't work out of that mentality that I'm going to say this is what it's going to be. It angers me when people say 'You don't have a vision.' I do have a vision. We are together working to build up God's kingdom. My vision is to move others forward with enthusiasm to bring about the kingdom for God today.



Relaxing *with grandson Bailey.*

Letters

When we lose sight of the stark difference between the life-giving power of Christ's reconciling love, and the fearsome power of military might, we are making a terrible mistake.

Mistakes are opportunities

I was surprised to see on the back page of the July MESSENGER, that McPherson College included a photo of one of its students wearing an ARMY tank top in their advertisement. The student was playing with children at a workcamp in the Dominican Republic.

I am sad that McPherson compromised its opportunity to be a truer witness for the possibilities of global peacemaking which the Church of the Brethren has historically supported (and which the US military—especially in Latin America—has not).

I called McPherson and spoke to their director of communications. She was very responsive to my concerns but explained that the college felt that editing the photo to hide the word ARMY would have been no more ethical than for the college to tell its students what to believe. These are both good points. Nevertheless, it is hard for me to believe that this picture would have been used in the single most prominent advertising spot in the magazine (not to mention the whole denomination) if he had been as clearly picking his nose.

But I am not just concerned about poor taste, or even someone's insensitivity to our church's anti-war tradition. Most deeply, I am concerned that it didn't even seem to anyone to be a problem. When I spoke with McPherson, only one other person had called them to share the same concern. It may be that nobody really noticed the shirt. As my friend Andy Loomis lamented, this photo is like a metaphor for the vision of peace which the church seems to be losing focus on.

Our church's Washington office for years brought clarity to our view on the world and our elected policymakers. It spoke with a unique voice in a city which has bought into an entirely different notion of power and how it should be used. Now, we have all but eliminated our support for the vital work which it did and for the clarity with which it spoke.

This may seem like a small thing, but when we as a church let our eyes go so lazy that we lose sight of the stark difference between the life-giving power of Christ's reconciling love, and the fearsome, death-destroying power of military might, we are making a terrible mistake. I am thankful that McPherson so graciously heard my concerns. I am also thankful that their advertisement has created an opportunity for us to present Christ's message with new clarity.

I share this letter not to humiliate anyone. We all make mistakes. I just hope that our church can restart a conversation on how to bring boldness to our peace witness. We have a vision which the world needs desperately.

Ken Miller-Rieman
North Manchester, Indiana

Chapel and church

Olden Mitchell's insightful "Chapel or church?" note [August] begs for additional observations. Retirement community chapels usually exist as the result of local churches and districts banding together to "go with Jesus in a continuing ministry to a world of need" that includes senior citizens. Retirement communities are frequently referred to as a "ministry" of the church in the best sense envisioned by Brother Olden.

Further, many of us who are blessed by "chapel" attendance are also actively involved in some local church that is anything but a "chapel." By prayer, financial support, and membership involvement i some local church, chapel attenders share and understand the point and distinction— often better that lots o mere attenders in many churches, just as Brother Olden's letter and activity log demonstrates.

To summarize, there's an appropriate place for both chapels and churches; aging may allow us to appreciate both.

Norman L. Hars
Roanoke, Va

Just call God God

Erin Matteson, writing in the June MESSENGER, points out the prevalence of inconsistencies in the use of pronouns referring to God. We reall don't know whether it should be "him," "her," "it," or something entirely different. "It" seems to be clearly wrong. A simple strategy would perhaps solve the problem: don't use a pronoun at all. For example, instead of referring to "God and

Forum on the name

MESSENGER has received numerous responses to the July editorial, "A new name for a new time," regarding the name of the Church of the Brethren. These will be included in the October edition. If you would like to contribute your opinion to the discussion, please write to MESSENGER, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120, or e-mail to ffarrar_gb@ brethren.org.

his children" or "God and her children," use the phrase "God and God's children." This may seem redundant at first but it is distinctly more honest than ascribing gender to God when such an attribute may be not only meaningless but also misleading.

Wilson B. Lutz
North Manchester, Ind.

Aukerman's testimony

Thank you, thank you, for the fine article by Dale Aukerman, "Why I believe" [July]. I can honestly say that as I read Aukerman's testimony, my own personal testimony in Christ was reaffirmed and strengthened.

We need more testimonies like Aukerman's. We need to hear more speakers at Annual Conference preach the saving gospel of Christ, and claim that Biblical truth for the church today. We need to hear more Brethren theologians who claim the resurrection of Christ to be true, and that Jesus was not simply a historical person, but someone who can transform lives.

I can only pray that the Church of the Brethren can be transformed towards Christ like Aukerman's testimony was for me.

Marty Moyer
Lima Ohio

Who sets the standard?

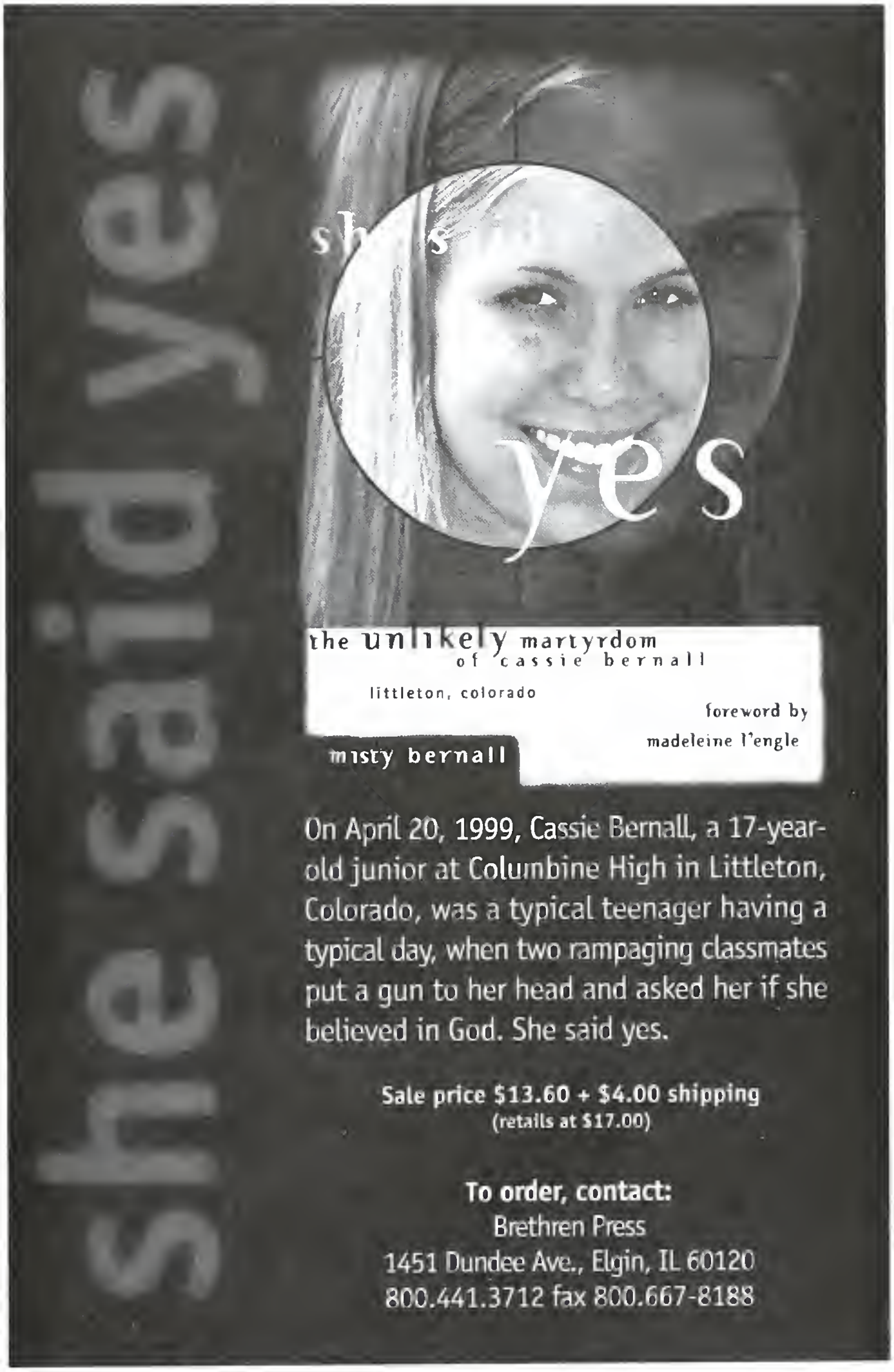
In regards to the interview of Allen Hansell by Fletcher Farrar on the Ministerial Leadership statement [See "A new day for Ministry," July], it causes me great concern. It appears that the Brethren leadership has forgotten who calls and sets the standard for His leaders. Since when have we been able to tell God what standards He must choose His leaders from? With this statement, our leadership problems will even be worse, or maybe not. The wedge being driven between leaders and parishioners may drive enough people away that there will be no problem. Higher education is good for some, but not all. Man's standards are not God's. He is able to guide His own into the training they need to serve Him and His people. We need to remember Isaiah 55: 8,9.

Eric W. Yost
Salix, Pa.

Ken Morse lives on

Thanks for Howard Royer's great memorial story on Ken Morse in your May issue.

When I read it I was planning the Bible study for the two sessions at Camp Brethren Woods near Harrisonburg, Va., that I had signed up



she said yes
she said yes
the unlikely martyrdom of cassie bernall
littleton, colorado
foreword by madeleine l'engle
misty bernall

On April 20, 1999, Cassie Bernall, a 17-year-old junior at Columbine High in Littleton, Colorado, was a typical teenager having a typical day, when two rampaging classmates put a gun to her head and asked her if she believed in God. She said yes.

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for this year. The study's theme was "God is in Our Midst." Click. I figured Ken Morse's hymn, "Move in our Midst," should be our theme hymn.

If it's fun—and you let them do it—kids will buy into just about any activity. So we rehearsed at vespers each evening. We added some collective hand motions. You should see those campers "Strike from our feet the fetters. . . " and "Kindle our hearts to burn. . . ."

Each Friday evening of the two weeks I was there at camp, we performed for the parents who came to retrieve the campers. One hundred campers and counselors were staged on two picnic table bleachers, singing and gesturing their hearts out.

Ken Morse, you live on in your music!

Sabra Stal
"Grandma" to Camp Brethren Woo
Arlington, V

Congregational Life Team Member

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INVITATIONS

The churches of beautiful, sunny San Diego, C would appreciate being informed about Brethren wh are living in our area so that we can invite them t church. Also come visit us and feel the warmth of th Spirit! Pastor Valentina Satvedi, North County Churc 3345 Linda Vista Road, San Marcos, CA 92069 (760) 59 9277 & Pastor Vernon Mitchell, First Church, 385 Westgate Place, San Diego CA 92105 (619) 262-1988

You're invited. Camp Ithiels' 50th Anniversary celebration. November 6, 1999. from 1:00–8:00 p.m. Campfir song fest, hay ride, swimming, canoeing, fishing, slid show, and concluding supper. Housing available at cam or nearby hotels. Help us celebrate by sending memorabilia, pictures, and stories, as well as addresses of member of the camp family. For more information call Berwy Oltman 407-595-5683 (Bloltman@juno.com) or write Camp Ithiel, PO Box 165, Gotha, FL 34734.

TRAVEL

Hawaii Tour 2000— An 11 day air, land, and sea tou of the Hawaiian Islands in a Christian atmosphere an among fellow Brethren. February 24th–March 5t 2000. For an informational brochure call (717) 62 5555. Tour hosts are Jim and Faye Myer. Welcome aboar

Grand Tour of Europe including Oberammerga Passion Play, Schwarzenau, and the Alps. Reservation available for two and three week tours. One tour is fille but openings still available for tours departing on June 2 July 17, and July 31, 2000. Please write to J. Kenneth Kre der, 1300 Sheaffer Rd, Elizabethtown, PA 17022.

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Turning Points

New members

Amwell, Stockton, N.J.: Thomas Everett, Marci Emery, Shawn Emery, Christian Emery, Lou Angelo, Jane Angelo, Janet Kerr

Ankeny, Iowa: Meagan Morgan, Cassandra Stowe

Beacon Heights, Fort Wayne, Ind.: David Bever, Mark Bever, Tom Bever, Lori Crain, Steve Crain, Elaine Forsythe, Katie Hollenberg, Donald J. Hunley, Michele Kadenko-Monirian, Lou Ann Stone, Michael Stone

Bethel, Carleton, Neb.: Candiss Kirchhoff, Austin Kirchhoff, Brett Troyer, Danielle Dornbierer, Bethany Beavers, Andrew Schardt, Anna Schardt, Garrett Schweitzer

County Line, Champion, Pa.: Amanda Wolk, Ashley Shawley, Katie Bitner, Erin Brady, Elizabeth Brady

Geiger, Friedens, Pa.: Kayla Urban, William Shockey

Greensburg, Pa.: William Thompson

Kent, Ohio: Richard and Millie Fox, Jason and Deena Smith, Justin Savarino

Leamersville, Duncansville, Pa.: James Strycker

Lewiston, Maine: Julie Soucy, Thomas Marston

Lewiston, Minn.: Todd Cage, Linda Risser

Maple Grove, New Paris, Ind.: Ryan Kirkdorffer, Jordan Kirkdorffer, Kenneth and Eileen Kurtz

Maple Spring, Holsopple, Pa.: Jonathan Shaffer, Debbie Toth, Shawn Toth, Laura Soha, Nicole Soha, Kellie Stevens, Adda Marion, Ashley Bittner, Douglas Baraniak, Brandon Bittner, Jeffery Bittner, Katie McDonald, Tracy McDonald

Mechanic Grove, Quarryville, Pa.: Rhonda Holloway, Ashley Holloway, Cory Holloway, Philip Johnson, Keri Hollinger

Memorial, Martinsburg, Pa.: Kyle Kensinger, Adam Shatzer, Jesse Hileman

Naperville, Ill.: Rajendra and Renny More, Joyous Thakor

New Enterprise, Pa.: Kim Turner, Erin Detwiler, Lennae Zimmerman, Roy and Angie Leach, Sandy Boyd, Brandon Boyd, Brittany Boyd, Pat and Susan Kolinchak, Tracy Brunner, Becky Law, Allen Boyd, Barb Settlemyer

Northern Colorado, Windsor, Colo.: Cheryl Zeiler

Peace, Portland, Ore.: Rusty and Karen Dinkins-Curling, Gary and Sonya Olsen-Hasek

Peoria, Ill.: Cara Janelle Baker, Marc Stuart Anderson

Pleasant Dale, Decatur, Ind.: Phil Compton, Joe Dustman, Chris Gerber, Ali Hirschy, Lindsey Landis, Joshua Soldner

Pomona Fellowship, Pomona, Calif.: Jim Pruitt

Prince of Peace, Littleton, Colo.: Ron Raab, Betty Raab, Betty Heisler, Debra Holt, Dave Wittrein, Judy DeRyke, Liz DeRyke, Ruth DeRyke, Michael Biefel

Roaring Spring, Pa.: Susan Johnson, Jaren Davis, Brenton Farshey, Jacob Guyer, Andrea Holsinger, Scott Johnson

Stevens Hill Community, Elizabethtown, Pa.: Dave and Donna Culbertson, Charles and Crystal Evans, Jessica and Theresa Eutsey, Gary and Brienna Dupler, Linda and Tommy Schmidt, Lucas Repa

Sugar Ridge, Custer, Mich.: Merritt Bongard, Lois Bongard, Scott Dumas, Kathy Dumas, Frank Martinchek, Maxine Martinchek, Curt Baird, Lisa Baird, Laurie Sutton, John Wahr

Thurmont, Md.: Debbie Barnes, Don Barnes, Daniel Dayhoff, Brian Lambert

Turkey Creek, Nappanee, Ind.: Shad Krull

Union Bridge, Md.: Jim and Gidget Isanogle, John Buffington, Donald and Rhonda Smith, Donna Straub, Brian Horr, Brian Johnson, Laura Lamb

Virden, Ill.: Tyler Hampleman, Keaton Peters, Kendal Tate, Christine Hiera, Amy McElfresh

West Charleston, Tipp City, Ohio: Kayla Haman, Megan Black, Mike Manning, Kenton Haman, Megan Wray, Kairee Pyles

White Oak, Manheim, Pa.: Anna Brubaker, Janessa Diffenderfer, Randall Martens, Brent Miller, Derric Miller, Wesley Miller, Andrew Rogers, Phillip Rogers, Timothy Rogers, Kyle Wenger, Heather Ziegler, Joram Zuck, Melita Zuck, Nathaniel Zuck

Wedding anniversaries

Bohrer, Joan and Wendell, Indianapolis, Ind., 50

Brumbaugh, Elmer and Averie, Kent, Ohio, 75

Delk, Bob and Janet, West Milton, Ohio, 50

Diehl, Norman E. and Frances M., Elizabethtown, Pa., 60

Gibson, Wayne and Lucille, Fort Collins, Colo., 50

Hart, William and Marjorie, Virden, Ill., 50

Holsinger, Ray and Gladys, Silver Spring, Md., 55

Leckron, Verl and Irene, Vancouver, Wash., 50

Lineweaver, Warren and Mary, Myerstown, Pa., 60

McDaniel, Willard and Jewel, Raymond, Calif., 60

Moore, Edwin and Ethel, Uniontown, Pa., 60

Overholser, Willard and Leora, Goshen, Ind., 50

Raymer, William and Ruby, Jacksonville, Fla., 50

Rohrer, James and Mary Jane, Timberville, Va., 50

Shoup, Irvin and Viva, Ashland, Ohio, 65

Tincher, Roy and Alberta, Fayetteville, W.Va., 55

Deaths

Acker, Charles L., 62, Bridgewater, Va., June 9

Altergott, Ruth Anderson, 87, Lawrence, Kan., May 8

Andes, Edna V., 94, Timberville, Va., May 31

Archer, Clara, 92, Pyrmont, Ind., June 24

Baker, Martha H., 87, Martinsburg, Pa., July 21

Baugher, Patricia A., 58, Westminster, Md., July 10

Bible, Myrtle V., 85, Franklin, W.Va., June 19

Boord, Frank E., 99, Uniontown, Pa., July 24

Bowles, Tina P. Ritchie, 36, Woodstock, Va., June 29

Bowman, Esther, 93, Des Moines, Iowa, Dec. 31

Bradley, Walter, 91, Manheim, Pa., July 1

Brown, Stella P., 97, Harrisonburg, Va., May 29

Brownfield, Geraldine, 68, Greensburg, Pa., June 4

Browning, Kathleen, 81, Des Moines, Iowa, March 1

Buchwalter, Clara L., 86, Wooster, Ohio, Aug. 2

Campbell, Katherine A., 72, New Market, Va., June 15

Carr, Albert L., 99, Fulks Run, Va., July 5

Cason, William B., 83, Staunton, Va., May 22

Catright, Darrell, 83, Kissimmee, Fla., June 25

Coslic, Leo, 83, Somerset, Pa., June 3

Couchenour, Ethel, 90, Greensburg, Pa., May 26

Dean, John R., 81, Harrisonburg, Va., June 12

Dennen, Frances Miller, 81, Springfield, Mo., April 2

DeSeelhorst, Earl, 88, Modesto, Calif., July 29

Dessenberg, A. Eileen, 79, Ashland, Ohio, July 19

Ditmars, Catherine, 79, Washington, Kan., July 20

Dove, Goldie L., 68, Linville, Va., May 22

DuBois, Pearl E., 89, Fresno, Calif., May 17

Erbaugh, Miriam Filbrun, 87, Dayton, Ohio, July 2

Feaster, Carl L., 82, Martin, W.Va., June 11

Ferranti, Emma Jane, 73, Greensburg, Pa., May 31

Fulk, Bessie M., 99, Timberville, Va., May 29

Garber, Erma H., 90, Bridgewater, Va., June 17

Gilmer, Grace L., 87, Harrisonburg, Va., June 26

Grogan, Herman C., Kansas City, Kan., July 10

Grove, Katherine, 80, South English, Iowa, June 13

Havens, Marion, 95, Beaverton, Mich., July 23

Hochstetler, Galen C., 86, Smithville, Ohio, July 13

Hose, Ernest B., 75, Moorefiled, W.Va., July 12

Houff, Charlotte Rankin, 80, Mt. Sidney, Va., June 19

Huffman, Alma B., 84, Swoope, Va., May 20

Ice, Bertha M., 84, Moorefield, W.Va., June 10

Johnson, Joan, 62, Blue Eye, Mo., July 13

Jordan, Wilda M., 85, Nova, Ohio, May 24

Keller, Sheldon E., 74, Timberville, Va., July 14

King, William H., 94, Bridgewater, Va., May 27

Kiracofe, Hazel M., 90, Waynesboro, Va., June 20

Kitzel, Kendall, 86, McPherson, Kan., Aug. 3

Klingler, Mary, 97, Lima, Ohio, Aug. 13

Knight, John W., Sr., 79, Luray, Va., May 29

Ladewig, Gladys Irene, 79, Lewiston, Minn., May 16

Lantz, L. Guy, 81, Timberville, Va., May 25

Lintula, Florence, 89, Kaleva, Mich.

Myers, Lillian Miller, 92, Bridgewater, Va., July 31

Peel, Lawrence, 76, McPherson, Kan., Aug. 2

Pifer, Richard "Rusty," 54, Perrysville, Ohio, April 28

Printz, Margie L., Rileyville, Va., July 10

Richards, Thomas E., 66, Stanley, Va., July 6

Sandridge, Dorlis W., 65, Cross Keys, Va., June 11

Saville, Junior Brook, 76, Moorefield, W.Va., July 11

Seal, Leo Cletus, 73, Luray, Va., June 2

Shipley, Harrison M., Jr., 71, Mathias, W.Va., July 7

Simmers, Lois C., 85, Harrisonburg, Va., June 18

Sprint, Elizabeth M., 74, Landes, W.Va., June 11

Stroupe, Lucille F., 82, Luray, Va., June 27

Summers, Donald E., 42, Harrisonburg, Va., July 9

Taylor, Garnet, 77, Carrolltown, Tex., May 18

Thomas, Harry S., 68, York, Pa., Aug. 1

Utz, Janet, Arcanum, Ohio, Aug. 3

Utz, Nellie Wharton, 74, Brightwood, Va., April 16

VanPelt, Glenn Allen, 51, Timberville, Va., June 28

Wagaman, Thomas, 63, York, Pa., July 29

Wagner, Irvin E., 89, Denton, Md., July 23

Weaver, Paul M., 81, North Manchester, Ind., and Sebring, Fla., July 2

Wellman, Floyd, Sebring, Fla., July 1

Wheeler, Robert B., 78, Ankeny, Iowa, July 11

Whittington, Janice, 56, Woodstock, Va., May 20

Wilkinson, Sara, 89, Greensburg, Pa., June 13

Wilson, Dick, 92, Claremont, Calif., July 10

Wine, Clarence V., 86, Mt. Sidney, Va., May 27

Wineguard, Nelson, 79, Grottoes, Va., July 11

Worley, Laverne A., 81, Hanover, Pa., July 30

Licensings

Speicher, Jill Keyser, Reading First, Reading, Pa., May 16

Struble, Joy Elizabeth, Lansing, Mich., May 1

Weaver, Herbert, Good Shepherd, Bradenton, Fla., Nov. 8, 1997

Pastoral placement

Brockway, Bonni, to New Enterprise, Pa.

Brockway, Wayne, to New Enterprise, Pa.

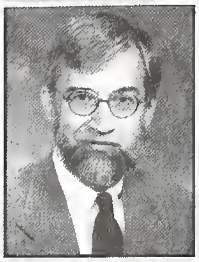
Davis, Vernita Jane, to New Beginnings, Warrensburg, Mo.

Detwiler, Sam, from Nettlecreek, Hagerstown, Ind., to Wenatchee, Wash.

Krider, Eldon, from Union Center, Nappanee, Ind., to Mexico, Ind.

Liller, Mark, from Moscow, Mt. Solon, Va., to Altoona 28th St., Altoona, Pa.

Sollenberger-Morphew, Tim, to Bethany, New Paris, Ind.



Editorial

This stuff has soul

When it approached time for us to move out of the big old house where we've lived for the past ten years, the agent from the moving company went from room to room punching an inventory of our stuff into his handheld computer. When he was finished, the computer yielded a printout saying we had 12,446 pounds of stuff to move. Six tons! I was aghast. "I didn't think we had much stuff," I whimpered, my self-image shattered. "Everybody says that," the mover said, none too sympathetically.

As we boxed and sorted, we tried to get rid of some of the extra accumulation—this pile to the trash, this load to the church rummage sale, bags of books to the library for its book sale. Going through books reminded me of old brainstorms and self-improvement whims—*How to Trade in the Commodities Market* lasted about as long for me as Arnold Schwarzenegger's body-building techniques. I'll pass those books along to the next momentary enthusiast. But I'm holding on to *Great Ideas in Western Civilization*, which I never read in college, thinking maybe I'm getting mature enough for it now. I notice how many Gandhi books I have, and Lincoln books, wondering how they have shaped me.

After the initial shock and revulsion from the realization I have *too much stuff* I began to think stuff isn't all bad. A wise counselor urged me to spend time sorting, because reflection can transform things. I dug into some boxes of papers I'd saved since high school, and remembered good times and girlfriends. I showed my daughter my high school newspaper recording Ed Sullivan's visit to our town. She'd heard of him and acted duly impressed.

It's interesting the churning that takes place in a move. After the old silver letter opener got misplaced the first day, I was hardly able to read the mail. I put my pruning shears in a special place where they wouldn't get lost, so they did. Cleaning up the yard one last time without them didn't seem right. But other things surfaced. I got out the shortwave radio I put away five years ago and listened to Africa Watch on Voice of America. An old clock that hasn't been wound in years got hung on the new wall and came back to life gladly. I started to pitch the oil lamp I found in the cabinet until Mom told me it had been hers as a child, so now I'm looking for a wick and a glass chimney for it. It takes only time to find the life in things. I sat down and read, probably for the first time, a *Sojourners* article I'd saved from 1977, and it still had the power to stir me.

I worry about liking things. Materialism and overconsumption are curses of our age, and possessions too quickly possess us. St. Benedict addressed this in his medieval Rule for monastic life, under the heading, "Whether the monks may have anything of their own." The answer is as you might expect: "This vice especially is to be cut out of the monastery by its roots. Let no one presume to . . . have anything as his own—anything whatever, whether book or tablet or pen or whatever it may be—since they are not permitted to have even their bodies or wills at their own disposal. Let all things be common to all, as it is written, and let no one say or assume that anything is his own."

The Quaker prophet George Fox spelled out the problem with possessions. "There is the danger and the temptation to you, of drawing your minds into your business, of clogging them with it, so that you can hardly do anything to the service of God . . . and your minds will go into the things, and not over the things. And then, if the Lord God cross you, and stop you by sea and land, and take your goods and customs from you, that your minds should not be cumbered, then that mind that is cumbered, will fret, being out of the power of God."

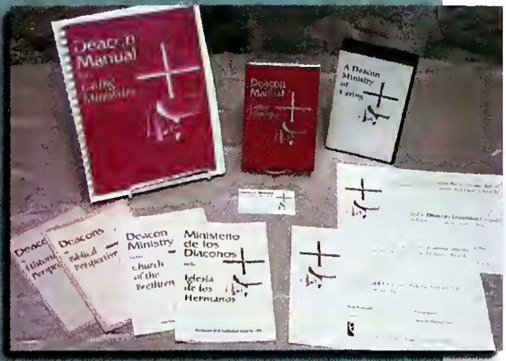
Because we get clogged with too much cumber we ten to blame the things in our life. We get angry at things an treat them badly; cars and old houses, even church buildings get neglected when we're out of the power of God. But it's not their fault. In *Care of the Soul* Thomas Moore makes the case that things have soul, a life of thei own, a bit of their Creator in them. He calls it *anima mundi*, the soul of the world. To recognize that objects have their own vitality and personality gives us new respect for them. We care for our houses, and bring beauty to them, because they care for us. Things have a lifespan that can outlast many human generations. An old Bible or an old church connect us to the cloud of witnesses.

In this view, there's really no such thing as an inanimate object. All things have *anima*, and our task is to reanimate them by giving their soul back to them, with respect. Recognizing the soul of things may give us fewe and better and older things. Nobody can love six tons of stuff. But when we see God in things, they don't get in the way of God.

So I wind the old clock, turn on the old radio, hunt fo the letter opener, and linger over photographs. It's a wonder I ever got the boxes packed, but I moved my stuff. And my stuff moved me.—FLETCHER FARRAR

New Resources

from the Association of Brethren Caregivers


Deacon Manual for Caring Ministries
Deacon Manual
A Deacon Ministry of Caring
Deacons Historical Perspective
Deacons Biblical Perspective
Deacon Ministry Church of the Brethren
Ministerio de los Diaconos Iglesia de los Hermanos

DEACON RESOURCES — ABC offers a full range of training and recognition resources to congregations wishing to establish or support a deacon ministry program. Deacon resources include the 319-page *Deacon Manual For Caring Ministries* (in handbook and large print versions); the "Annual Conference Statement on Deacon Ministries" and training video on deacon ministries (in English and Spanish); deacon and deacon emeritus certificates; deacon identification and/or business cards; and study materials about deacon ministry from biblical and historical perspectives.

CHOOSING DEATH: A STUDY GUIDE ON EUTHANASIA — Written by Graydon F. Snyder, this Study Guide uses biblical texts, case studies and questions to help study groups and families explore their ideas and beliefs about euthanasia from a Brethren perspective. This Study Guide is the second piece in a series of materials ABC is creating on end-of-life decisions.

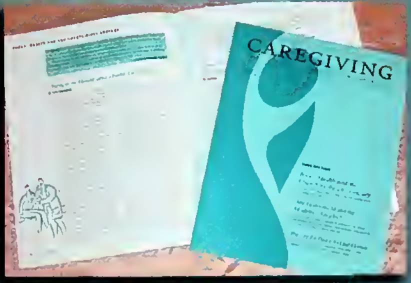
Lafiya Care Group Handbook
The Lafiya Guide
A Congregational Handbook For Whole-Person Health Ministry

LAFIYA CARE GROUP HANDBOOK AND LAFIYA GUIDE — Learn ways the church can provide holistic approaches to fostering wellness in spirit, mind and body. The bound, 128-page *Lafiya Guide* provides an introduction to congregationally-based, whole-person health ministries. The *Lafiya Care Group Handbook* describes the benefits and methods of establishing a small group ministry.

CARING MINISTRIES 2000 CONFERENCE — Audio and video tapes are available of presentations made by keynote speakers at ABC's biennial conference for caregivers. Speakers included Bible Study Leader Barbara Lundblad, award-winning writer Phil Yancey, author Robert Raines, Bridgewater College President Phillip Stone and others.

Real People
Real Issues
Real Ministry for
"All God's People"

ALL GOD'S PEOPLE — Congregations can learn ways to establish a ministry with people who have developmental disabilities through this new 14-minute video. Created by the Virlina District, this video gives ideas on ways to be inclusive and receptive to the gifts of all God's people.


Caregiving

CAREGIVING — ABC's quarterly publication provides practical tools to anyone involved in caring ministries. Subscribers also receive in-depth articles that explore issues of caregiving from Brethren perspectives.

For order information, call the Association of Brethren Caregivers at (800) 323-8039.

CELEBRATE IGLESIA DE LOS HERMANOS, *the Church of the Brethren in th* *Dominican Republic.* Congregations: • PRINCE OF PEACE *Principe de Paz,* Sa Luis • FOUNTAIN OF LIFE *Fuente de Vida,* Los Guaricanos • NEW LIFE *Nuev* *Renacer,* Los Toros • GOD, FOUNTAIN OF LOVE *Dios Fuente de Amor,* Viajam • MOUNT OF OLIVES *Montes de los Olivos,* Magueyal • LIVING WATER *Agua Viva* Arroyo Salado • ROCK OF HOREB *Peña de Horeb,* Bastidas • LIGHT AND TRUT *Luz y Verdad,* San Juan • THE GOOD SOLDIER *El Buen Soldado,* Fond Negro • MARCHING *en Marcha,* Villa Nizao. Fellowships and projects • CHRIST, THE TRUE ONE *Cristo Verdadero,* San Jose • BRETHREN I HARMONY *Hermanos en Armania,* Paraiso • TRUE LIFE *La Vida Verdadera* Tabara Abajo • PENIEL Santo Domingo • WALK OF HOPE *Camino de Esperanza,* Azua • EBENEZER Bonao. Preaching points: • CHALONA *through San Juan* • LAS PIEDRAS, Paraiso *through Villa Nizao* • SABANA TORSA *through San Luis.* • *Join in partnership with the thriving, youthful, Spirit-filled church in the Dominican Republic through your prayers and your gifts.*

NINETEEN... AND GROWING

"...built together spiritually
into a dwelling place for God."
– Ephesians 2:22

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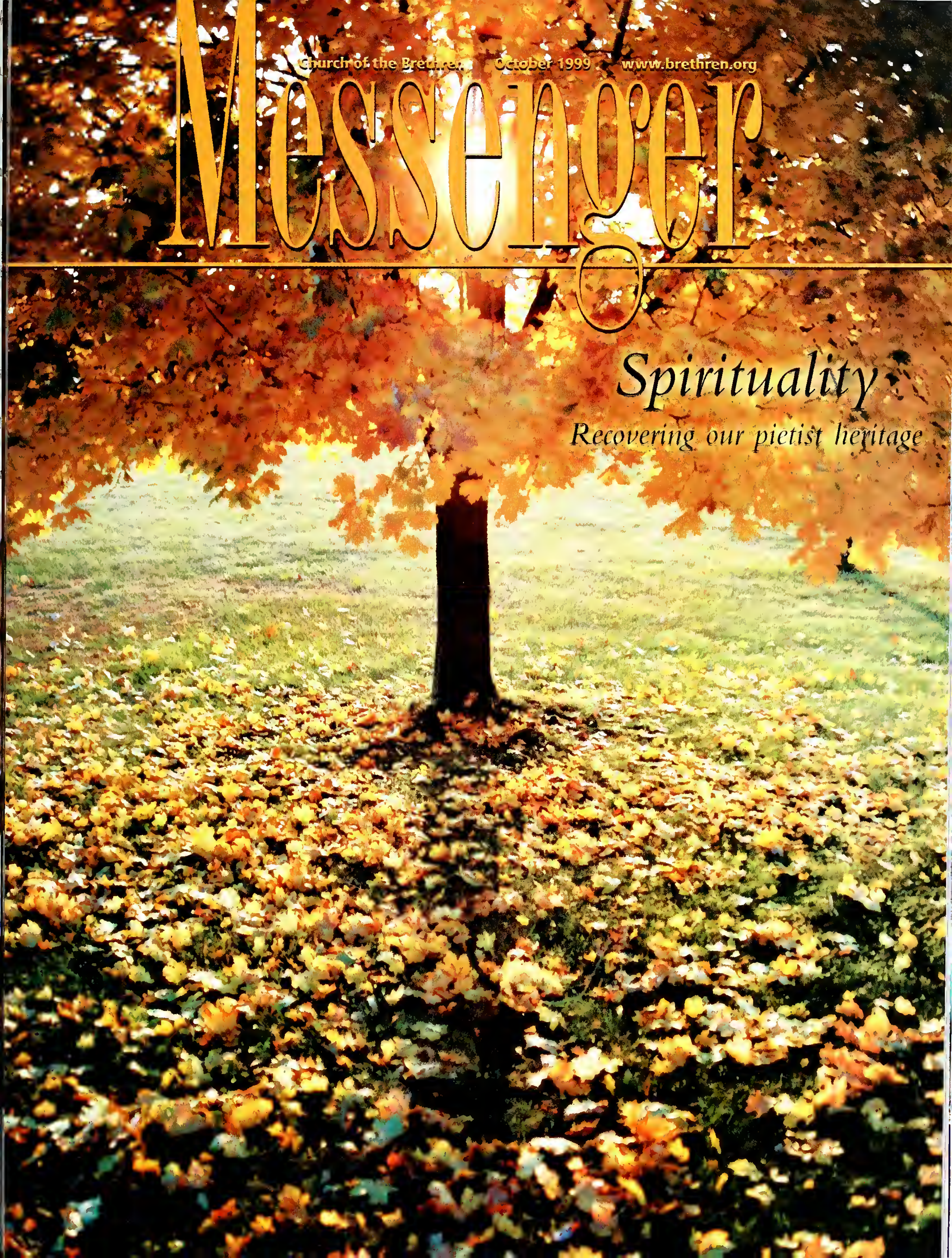
Church of the Brethren October 1999 www.brethren.org

Messenger



Spirituality

Recovering our pietist heritage

On Earth Peace Assembly

1974 ~ 1999

Celebrates 25 Years of Peace Education

In 1974, M.R. Zigler, retired Church of the Brethren executive and peace advocate, developed a movement to serve the intellectual and spiritual soul of Brethren who sought to be true to the historic peace witness of our denomination. On December 20, 1974, a group of people invited by M.R. gathered at the Brethren Service Center in New Windsor, MD, to consider formation of a "hands-on" peace program for the church that became known as On Earth Peace Assembly (OEPA).

ENGAGING THE PRESENT

The Peace Place Bookstore & Resource Center

- Conflict Resolution Materials
- Peace-Related Curriculum
- Children's Story Books
- Alternative Gifts & Toys
- 10% Discount to Churches

Ministry of Reconciliation

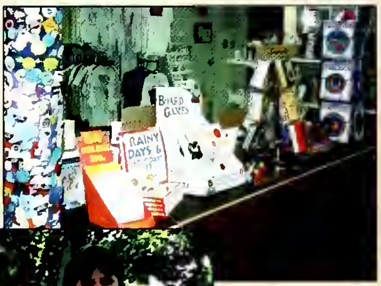
- Offers Matthew 18 Workshops to Congregations
- Developing a Network of Approved MoR Practitioners Available to Congregations
- Supports District Discipleship & Reconciliation Committees

The Peace Academy

- Youth Peace Retreats
- College Intern Program
- Youth Peace Travel Teams
- JOYA (Journey of Young Adults)
- Conflict Resolution Training for Outdoor Ministries

MISSION STATEMENT

"On Earth Peace Assembly is a movement grounded in the Church of the Brethren dedicated to following the teaching of Jesus Christ in renewing and living out our biblical and denominational heritage of peace. Our purpose, through religious and educational activities, is to empower people to discern the things that make for peace—in ourselves, within families, in our global environment, between nations—and to advocate peace and justice, seeking the realization of God's will on earth as it is in heaven."



▲ *The Peace Place Bookstore & Resource Center.*

◀ *1999 JOYA Team: (l to r) Brian Flory, Christy Van Horn, Joy Struble, Erin Flory and Matt Rittle*

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On Earth Peace Assembly — Brethren Service Center

Messenger

Vol. 148, No. 9 October 1999 www.brethren.org

Editor: Fletcher Farrar
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Publisher: Wendy McFadden
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On the cover: This month MESSENGER features a cluster of articles on the theme of spirituality. To illustrate the theme we have chosen a photograph by David Radcliff, who is Brethren Witness director as well as extraordinary photographer. In this image, the sun is just peeking through the tree—not unlike God's presence—we dare not look directly, but here is a sense of nearness and we feel the warmth nonetheess. As the tree sheds its leaves, we recall the rhythm of the easons and the sense of the dependability of God's presence. he rootedness of a tree allows it to weather the vicissitudes f a dry spell or heavy winds.

Departments

2 From the Publisher
3 In Touch
8 News
29 Letters
31 Turning Points
32 Editorial

Features

12 Spiritual roots
When a number of souls could not find the spiritual nourishment they were looking for in the established church, they formed a cell group that eventually became the Church of the Brethren. Now Brethren are finding new vitality in spiritual practices they are recovering from their own pietist heritage. Wallace B. Landes, Jr., pastor of the Palmyra, Pa., congregation, provides insights based on his academic research.

16 Keeping a spiritual journal
Keeping a journal is a useful tool for drawing closer to God. "We come to community, and to call, richer and clearer for the inner work we have done," writes Gayle Hunter Sheller, a Church of the Brethren pastor from Springfield, Ore. An accompanying article explains how to make your own journal book.

19 Spiritual direction
Many are finding their interior life enhanced by the help of a friend with whom they discuss prayer and God's leading. Though this ancient practice is called "direction," the real director is the Holy Spirit. Glenn Mitchell, pastor of the State College, Pa. congregation, provides insights from his considerable experience in this field.

22 Dream with us
MESSENGER invites readers to share their dreams for the Church of the Brethren in the 21st century.

24 Forum on the name
The July MESSENGER editorial said it is time to revive the discussion of a new name for the Church of the Brethren, and invited readers to write their opinions and suggestions. Those responses are included here.

From the Publisher

"And you shall call the sabbath a delight" (Isa. 58:13).

When I was growing up, on Sunday we didn't do certain things—go shopping, work, take part in particular kinds of entertainment. I remember being admonished once for sewing on a Sunday, even though for me it was a form of relaxation as much as a task to be completed. Over the years I've strayed from that strict an observance of the sabbath, but I still feel mildly guilty if I go to the store on Sunday.

What I didn't properly comprehend as a child was that the sabbath has less to do with removing things from one's life and more to do with filling it up again. If I am busy that day doing all the same things I do every other day of the week, there's no room to replenish my spiritual well.

In *When True Simplicity Is Gained: Finding Spiritual Clarity in a Complex World,* photographer Micah Marty writes, "When we decide to focus on God, and our faith, simplicity is less difficult to embrace; pushing things out of the way then reveals rather than diverts us from our goal. As a result, we do not have the gnawing sense of giving up things of great value (the consumer culture's definition of simplifying), because what is left in our lives has more appeal and meaning than what was discarded."

I've just completed a sabbath that lasted 10 weeks. It was time away, in some respects, but it was also time to be more present. It was a time to strip away some of the responsibilities and complexity of life, but it was also a time to live life more fully. "The practice of taking sabbath time is not about taking time off, but about retaking time, taking time in God's name," writes Inagrace T. Dietterich of the Center for Parish Development.

As in any good sabbatical, I made a distinct change of pace. I spent more time being than doing. I enjoyed several "dates" with the artist part of myself. I participated in events that gave me new insight into who I am. I read luxuriously in areas such as spirituality, creativity, writing, leadership, psychology—and still got only halfway down my list.

By the end of my sabbatical, I felt better prepared to resume my work. I have renewed energy and a clearer perspective with which to approach the tasks at hand. I have new determination to maintain better balance between work and the rest of my life. I'm making time for that reading list. I'm attending more concerts. I'm trying to be more closely attuned to God's Spirit.

In short, I'm trying to infuse my life with sabbath time, no matter what day of the week I find it.

Wendy McFadden

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Ken Koons, *Carroll County Times*

Dale H. Aukerman, *1930–1999*

What made Dale different

An overflow crowd packed the sanctuary of the Westminster (Md.) Church of the Brethren on the evening of Sept. 12 to remember and celebrate the life of Dale H. Aukerman, who died after a three-year struggle with cancer on Sept. 4 at the age of 69.

Hundreds of Brethren and others packed the ground-floor pews, the balcony, extra folding chairs and even the choir loft, demonstrating some of the many lives touched by Aukerman and his work as a pastor, author, Brethren Volunteer Service coordinator, and peace advocate. All three of Aukerman's children participated in the memorial service, with music and readings, along with several of Aukerman's friends and colleagues.

Paul Grout, pastor of the Genesis Church of the Brethren in Putney, Vt., delivered the message, emphasizing the role of Jesus Christ in Aukerman's abundant life. "Dale was not perfect," Grout said. "He just sought to conform every part of his life to Jesus Christ. Dale had gifts, but we all had gifts. What made Dale different was Jesus Christ." Aukerman wrote the cover article, "Why I believe," for the July MESSENGER.

The service, planned by Aukerman before his death, also included many of his favorite hymns, readings from two of his books, and a listing in the bulletin of some of the books that were most influential in his life, including Dostoyevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, Culbert Rutenber's *The Dagger and the Cross*, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *The Cost of Discipleship*.

Afterwards, a long line snaked through the halls of the church to greet the family and share in a meal together. Many of those waiting held a copy of the local *Carroll County Times* newspaper from that morning, which carried a cover story on Aukerman, part of a lengthy series the newspaper had done during Aukerman's illness. The headline was a quote from Aukerman's ever-present wife, Ruth: "He died who he was." —WALT WILTSCHECK

Flexibility: *Melvin Montgomery, left, of the Germantown Brick church, Rocky Mount, Va., stepped in to help after health problems sidelined Bob Jones, pastor of the Monte Vista congregation, Callaway, Va.*

Feeding the 5,000 a miracle of teamwork

For over a year, Bob Jones, pastor of Monte Vista Church of the Brethren, Callaway, Va., had been busy preparing for the Old German Baptist Brethren Annual Meeting in Roanoke.

Bob was coordinator of the Church of the Brethren food services, the group that would provide food and drink for thousands of Old German Baptist Brethren for the duration of their conference.

A team of coordinators for food preparation, desserts, concessions, cashiers, hosts and hostesses, and volunteers was in place. Food had been purchased, desserts were being prepared, and volunteers were ready for the May 22-25 event.

But then Bob had his plans changed. On May 10 he was taken to the hospital with heart problems, and had heart surgery a few days later. On the way home from the hospital, he asked his wife and co-worker, Doris, to drive by the Annual Meeting site. Each day he dropped by to observe how things were going. By this time, Melvin Montgomery and his wife, Kay, had stepped in to coordinate the final week's efforts.

Feeding almost 5,000 Old German Baptist Brethren sisters and brothers required a great amount of planning and a lot of cooking. Volunteers from 46 Church of the Brethren congregations in Virlina District, plus some from Buckeye Church of the Brethren (Abilene, Kan.), and Union Bridge (Md.) Church of the Brethren, were joined by some United Methodists, Episcopalians, and Baptists to give 648 volunteer days' worth of work. Among the items served were 1,452 hamburgers, 505 gallons of soft drinks, 50 pounds of popcorn, 35 gallons of sno-cone syrup and 8,750 pounds of ice, 28 hams and 1,200 barbecued chicken halves, more than 1,200 ice cream cups and novelties, and more than 700 pies, cakes, and cobblers.

Virlina District gave more than $8,000 in proceeds from the sale of food to "Partnership for Peace," a General Board ministry of food relief for Sudan. Extra food was shared locally with other hungry people. Volunteers took meals and leftover items to Roanoke Area Ministries, the Rescue Mission, and Camp Bethel. —JULIE M. HOSTETTER

Caring pours into Kosovo health kits

When Eddie Edmonds, pastor of the Moler Avenu Church of the Brethren in Martinsburg, W.Va., had a brainstorm, he didn't expect such a flood of caring to result.

Eddie wanted to make health kits for Kosovo as the war was raging this spring, and thought it would be great to get the community involved.

When he called the local newspaper, *The Journal,* it soon turned into a front-page story, and the donations started pouring in. They came from other churches and from individuals, small donations and large ones.

Shoppers sent out with cash to get supplies for the kits soon cleaned out every store in the area of some items, like metal nail files, so they had to go into the surrounding region of Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Eddie estimated that about 250 individuals were involved, representing about 60 congregations in addition to Moler Avenue. The net result: 1,911 healt kits put together and delivered to the Brethren Servic Center in New Windsor,

ld., in four pickup
rucks, plus $1,000 cash
o offset shipping costs. At
n estimated value of
12.50 per kit, that repre-
ents $24,887.50 worth of
aring — all started with
ne church in a small city
n the West Virginia pan-
andle.

"It was a wonderful pro-
ect," Eddie said. "It really
ouched a chord in the
ommunity here."

St. Paul of the aribbean" dies

orge Toledo died May 26
n Puerto Rico, succumb-
ng to cancer after a
truggle of several years.
orge was the translator
or Earl Ziegler many
imes, the latest being in
ugust 1998. That was
orge's last trip to the
ominican Republic, to
isit a people he dearly
oved.

Years earlier, he was the
nspiration and drive for
he fledgling Vega Baja,
uerto Rico, fellowship,
hich used his house as a
lace of worship until a
uilding was erected. Jorge
vas a member of the
hurch of the Brethren
eneral Board 1990–91.

In August 1979, Hurri-
ane David devastated the south central part of the Dominican island, stripping people of their homes and necessities. Organizing the Brethren in Puerto Rico, he and a small band transported medicines and clothing quarterly to the island in the 1980s.

It became evident that spiritual hunger was as great as the physical hunger, so he began teaching Bible stories using drama and music. Response was so great he began preaching in the streets and inviting people to accept Jesus. Jorge integrated his passion for souls with his service ministries of medicine and clothing. Soon he and his fellow workers gave birth to three churches.

In 1988 he asked whether the denomination might consider his work a mission opportunity. The 1990 Annual Conference voted to open a new mission field, and the work in the Dominican Republic became a new Church of the Brethren project.

Jorge Toledo was called by those who knew him well as "the St. Paul of the Caribbean." He was a man of unusual vision and integrity, and he had an unstoppable dream.—Earl K. Ziegler

Olive and Roger Roop

Heifer Project pioneers honored

The **Union Bridge (Md.)** Church of the Brethren gathered its members, friends, and neighbors to honor longtime members Roger and Olive Roop and their family.

It was on their farm near Union Bridge that the first cattle were kept while waiting for transportation by Heifer Project. The church has so many younger people asking about how Heifer Project got started, members produced a video called "A Living History." Roger and Olive Roop and their three daughters participated in a panel discussion on the topic. They also discussed their early involvement with prisoners of war who worked on their farm, and with exchange students and "fresh air" kids.—Mary Louise Dotterer

Goshen City *Church of the Brethren*

Goshen City church celebrates centennial

Goshen City Church of the Brethren, Goshen, Ind., is observing its centennial during 1999. After meeting in various buildings from 1895 to 1898, the congregation erected its first building in 1899. In October 1957, construction started on the current building, which was completed in 1959.

To commemorate the centennial, City Church planned several activities. In May there was a Heritage Sunday, when ancestors of original members were honored. There was a hymn sing and ice cream social in August. A homecoming is planned for October 17. There are also plans for former pastors Vernon Miller, Nevin Zuck, and Phyllis Carter to return to preach at some time during the year. For more information, visit the church Website at npcc.net/~citycob.

Staff learn to worship while they work

Nearly 50 people gathered Sept. 16-18 at the General Board offices in Elgin, Ill., to learn the techniques of Worshipful Work from Charles Olsen and Sister Ellen Morseth. Olsen is the author of *Transforming Church Boards* and co-author of *Discerning God's Will Together.*

Pastors, district representatives, Bethany students, and General Board staff were taught how to transac church business using a model that incorporates worship into the business meeting.

Rather than using Robert's Rules of Order as the guide in a business meeting, participants were taught how to incorporate various elements of worshi so that faith guides the process of making decisions. Rather than debating and then choosing the most logical answer to an issue, Worshipful Work teaches how to seek "the yearning of God" to help people be faithful to God's calling.

Participants will gather for another three-day training event in January at Bethany Seminary. These two events are co-sponsored by Congregational Life Ministries and Bethany Seminary. Enthusiastic about the process as the training concluded on Saturday, pastor Dennis Brown said he felt he was eing reborn spiritually by articipating.—Jeff Glass

idewater Brethren old mini-conference

or more than 20 years, the ongregations in the Tidewa-er area of Virlina District ave been meeting for an nnual mini-conference the irst weekend in June. They egan the tradition as a way or churches that are geo-raphically separated from ost of the district to con-ect and maintain their sense f being Brethren.

Included in the group are he Christian Church Unit-ng, Hopewell, Ivy Farms, nd West Richmond hurches, and the New ovenant and Wakefield hapel fellowships. Cities epresented are Virginia each, Hopewell, Newport ews, and Richmond, all in irginia.

Sixty-five participants xplored this year's theme, Evangelism: Sharing the ood News!" Julie Hostet-er, Congregational Life eam coordinator, led wor-hip, small group activities, onversations, and role play hat focused on the theme f evangelism.

The Tidewater area rethren enjoyed their nnual mini-conference so uch that several years after began they decided to have n annual one-day mid-winter gathering as well. ach congregation takes a urn hosting this event.

A servant to the children of Tijuana

Helen Lancaster is changing her part of the world. She is changing it by feeding one little mouth, hugging one woman, and giving all that she has to a poverty-stricken area in Tijuana, Mexico. A member of the Bella Vista congregation, Los Angeles, Calif., Helen Lancaster serves God by giving to one person at a time.

In 1993 Helen did not set out to make an impact; she simply saw a need and did her part. She remembered visiting a Tijuana orphanage as a teen. She recalled the babies she saw then and remembered how she wanted to bring them home with her. During a 1993 visit Helen gave beans and oranges to the street children.

Helen came back to the Bella Vista congregation with a challenge for the women of her church. She asked them to give food and clothing to be delivered to needy children. And Helen and her family started collecting aluminum cans and having garage sales to raise money for food for the children.

Ever since that time, with courage, compassion, and a love for others, she has been the hands and feet of Jesus to many in Tijuana. —Stacie Chambers, *Pleasant Dale Church of the Brethren, Decatur, Ind.*

Martha and C. Henry Hunsberger

Honored for years of service

C. Henry and Martha Hunsberger were honored by the Welsh Run Church of the Brethren, Mercersburg, Pa., at a surprise celebration during the church's annual fellowship meal for Henry's 26 years as elder in charge of the congregation. Although he is retiring as the elder, Henry Hunsberger will continue his 49th year of ministry at the church.

The Hunsbergers have not only served the church, but have been active in Mid-Atlantic District as well. Henry has served as district moderator twice, has been a longstanding member of the ministerial commission and its interviewing subcommittee, and was instrumental in building Shepherd Spring Camp. He has also served on Standing Committee of Annual Conference.

The congregation gave Henry and Martha a scrapbook that highlighted important events from their tenure. The church also sponsored a day in their honor on the local Christian radio station. —W. David Kent

News

Northeast drought response project catches on quickly

Representatives from most of the districts in the eastern part of the country joined representatives from Church World Service, Mennonite Disaster Service, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America Domestic Disaster Response, and other agencies in New Windsor, Md., on Aug. 26 to examine possible responses to the severe drought in parts of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions.

It started as just a meeting of Church of the Brethren district representatives initiated by the General Board's Emergency Response/Service Ministries (ER/SM) but expanded as others learned of the event and expressed interest.

Reports emphasized the long-term nature of the problem and the complexities of meeting needs in various areas. Farmer Elvin Molison of the Hanover (Pa.) Church of the Brethren said that this year's crop losses and the longer-term effects of those losses will be staggering, especially for the farmers themselves.

Out of that meeting has come the "Family Farm Drought Response." Shirley Norman, a Church of the Brethren member from Markleysburg, Pa., and a service facilitator for Church World Service, has accepted the position of chair for the project committee.

The project grew quickly, with requests for 30 truckloads of hay coming to ER/SM through Sept. 17. These requests are in addition to 16 truckloads of hay sent earlier from the Midwest and West to Chambersburg, Pa., for distribution, mostly to non-ER/SM requests.

ER/SM has also been active in responding to the August earthquak and tragic aftermath in northwest Turkey. The General Board approve a grant of $25,000 from the Emergency Disaster Fund to support the humanitarian efforts of Church World Service, which is seeking to send $500,000 in aid from its 35 member denominations.

ER/SM has also sent additional material resources, with two 10,000-gallon water bladders, four 3,000-gallon water bladders, 30,000 wool blankets, and 500 rolls of plastic sheeting.

Scott becomes ABC board chair; Peters is chair-elect

The Association of Brethren Caregivers Board spent much of its Sept. 10-11 meeting in Elgin, Ill., caring for the transition of leaders as terms of office expired and new board members were appointed.

During the meetings, the board recognized the contributions of board chair Robert D. Cain, Jr., of Greenville, Ohio. Although Cain will complete his term of service Dec. 31 this marked his last time officiating at an ABC board meeting. ABC Board chair-elect Marilyn Lerch Scott of Naperville, Ill., will become chair on Jan. 1.

The board appointed Bentley Peters of Elgin, Ill., as the new chair-elect, effective Jan. 1. Peters has served on the ABC board since last spring.

The board also appointed Margare Yoder Fultz of Lemoyne, Pa., and aul Ullom-Minnich of Moundridge, an., for second terms. Delegates at he 1999 Annual Conference elected hil Flory of Bridgewater, Va., and eidi Loomis of Boalsburg, Pa., to econd terms on the board. Board embers also received committee ssignments.

In other business, the board pproved the appointment of nine ew volunteers who will serve as ommittee members in various ministry areas of ABC. The board ppointed Tom Williams of Midland, a., to serve the Brethren Chaplains etwork; Joan Deeter of North anchester, Ind., to serve the Fellowship of Brethren Homes; Joyce erson of Mt. Morris, Ill., Judith allace of East Berlin, Pa., and onna Lerew of York, Pa., to serve he Health Education and Research inistry; Kent and Elva Jean Naylor f McPherson, Kan., to serve jointly he Older Adult Ministry; and Bryan oyer of North Manchester, Ind., nd John Nantz of Harrisburg, Pa., o serve the Voice Ministry.

rea 1 urban churches meet or "Spirit in the City"

Spirit in the City: An Urban Celebration" was a day of worshipful elebration in Harrisburg, Pa. The ug. 14 event, sponsored by Congregational Life Teams, brought ogether nine urban congregations epresenting four districts across rea 1 for worship and an exchange f ideas.

More than 50 people representing rban and suburban congregations istened to stories of established rban congregational life and had the opportunity to share personal stories in small groups as well as to ask "what if" questions regarding urban ministry. The questions sparked the group's enthusiasm for continuing the work of Area 1's Urban Task Team.

Urban congregations across Area 1 identified the hope that rural/suburban congregations seeking outreach ministries will consider urban partnerships as a much-needed option for the new millennium.

Bob Gross

Mission director Merv Keeney *met with Brethren leaders Lavjibhai Gamit, chairman, (center) and D.S. Christian, secretary, during consultations in India.*

Meetings work toward reconciliation in India

Merv Keeney, the General Board's director of Global Mission Partnerships, and Bob Gross, coordinator for the Ministry of Reconciliation, reported both progress and disappointment in their conversations with the churches in India Aug. 22-27.

Although the much-hoped-for joint meetings were not held, Gross and Keeney met with representatives of each group separately in Gujarat State. Many US members had been in prayer for the effort to bring a new spirit of cooperation and reconciliation.

For more than a year the groundwork has been laid for joint meetings between the two churches, both rooted in Church of the Brethren mission begun in India in 1895. After a decision to unite with other mission churches in 1970 to form the United Church of North India, a segment of the Brethren broke away from that group in1978 and has existed separately since. Tensions and court cases have hampered the growth and ministry of both churches. Even families are divided in their loyalties.

"Our goal has been to invite the two bodies toward a new relationship rooted in our oneness in Christ," Keeney said. "As the mother church with historical and ecclesiastical links to both, we can play a role to foster mutual cooperation between these members of Christ's church. But these divisions have been decades in the making and will not be resolved in a meeting or two."

Recent action by the General Board to name new trustees in an effort to ensure continuation of one of the Brethren property trusts was cited by the Church of North India as the reason for declining to participate at this time. Other Church of the Brethren trust properties are largely already in the hands of CNI.

Sharing hopes for the cooperative use of the properties for the work of the churches in India was a key point of discussion with Brethren leadership and trustees.

Elizabethtown College events mark centennial celebration

In celebration of its centennial year, Elizabethtown College in Elizabethtown, Pa., plans numerous special events.

One of these was Sept. 19, when a series of vespers services kicked off beside Lake Placida. The service included singing by the Palmyra Church of the Brethren children's choir and choirs from other Brethren churches, a re-enactment of Alexander Mack's pilgrimage to America, and a candlelit prayer time.

Other events in addition to the vespers services will be held throughout the year. Among them, an exhibit on "Brethren at Home, Work, and Worship" featuring century-old meetinghouse photos by Elizabethtown College founder J.G. Francis will be on display through Dec. 15.

Servant Leadership combines with Brethren Homes Forum

Thirty-five people representing 17 facilities attended the Association of Brethren Caregivers' third annual Brethren Homes Forum, held Aug. 29-31 in New Windsor, Md.

An additional 20 people participated in a special Servant Leadership Workshop on Aug. 30. Held in conjunction with the forum, the workshop featured The Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership facilitators Tamyra Freeman and Isabel Lopez.

The fourth annual forum will be held at the Bridgewater (Va.) Retirement Community next summer.

Greg Laszakovits

During the Urban Peace Tour, *Lindsay Dubose shares his faith journey with the Trotwood, Ohio congregation, while Lysa Montauban, Gilbert Romero, Don Mitchell, Holly Flumerfelt (hidden), Marilyn Montauban,and Ya-Landa Harris look on.*

Diversity and commonality mark Ohio Urban Peace Tour

The 1999 Urban Peace Tour, Sept. 8–12, saw Brethren urbanites from around the country gather to share worship and dialog with five congregations in Southern Ohio District (Trotwood, Troy, West Charleston, Prince of Peace, Greenville).

Worship was musical in flavor, with powerful testimonials and preaching throughout. Each night gave congregants a chance to taste the way God and the Spirit move in different churches and individuals. One person responded: "I loved it. We've never moved and had that much fun in worship before. I really felt God tonight."

The tour was enlightening not only for the congregations, but for the participants as well. "It was so much fun! I've never been part of a group like this before. I discovered my ethnicity—Pennsylvania Dutch!" exclaimed Holly Flumerfelt.

Members on the 1999 tour included Lindsay Dubose and Brenda Wilkinson (Germantown), Holly Flumerfelt (Altoona 28th St.), Greg Laszakovits (Phoenix First), Ya-Landa Harris and Don Mitchell (Imperial Heights), Lysa and Marilyn Montauban (First Haitian, Brooklyn), and Gilbert Romero (Bella Vista).

"We were blessed to have so many parts of the country, different cities, and ethnic backgrounds represented on the tour," said Greg Laszakovits, coordinator of the tour.

The tour was sponsored by each congregation visited, the Office of Brethren Witness, and the Southern Ohio District. Another tour is tentatively planned for early 2000 in southern California.

Pension plan members offered bond fund option

The 4,000 members of the Brethren Pension Plan now have a fourth investment option: a bond fund.

Beginning Oct. 1, Brethren pastors, denominational and district staff, and staff of other Church of th Brethren agencies are able to choose the bond fund in addition to the common stock, balanced, and short-term funds.

This fund is expected to fill a nich in investment options. From Aug. 1, 1998, through July 31, 1999, the common stock fund (investments primarily in stocks) produced an 18.2-percent return. The balanced fund (a mix of stocks and bonds) yielded 12.1 percent. The short-tern fund (cash and cash equivalents suc as asset-backed securities and commercial paper) yielded 4.5 percent.

This new fund (bonds and asset-backed securities) is expected to yield between 6 and 8 percent.

"This new fund will give people who are by nature a little more fisally conservative an additional nvestment choice," said Don Fecher, irector of Brethren Benefit Trust's mployee Financial Services.

Allocation changes to the pension lan are made at the first of each nonth. For more information on the ew bond fund option or to modify a ension allocation, contact Marilyn iegler at mziegler_bbt@ rethren.org or at 1-800-746-1505.

eams help repair hurricane amage in Honduras

he second of two rebuilding teams eturned on Aug. 30 from the Cenral American nation of Honduras, here the groups assisted in rebuildng homes after the damage caused y Hurricane Mitch.

Sponsored by the General Board, oth the first (Aug.15-23) and econd group (Aug. 22-30) lived and orked in the southern Honduran ommunity of El Estribo. Like most f Honduras, the five days of torrenial rain in El Estribo last November eft homes and livestock destroyed, ouled cropland, and did significant amage to the already fragile econmy of the community.

The Global Mission Partnerships nd Brethren Witness offices orgaized the trip. A second work elegation is tentatively planned for ext June.

all events and workshops ffer growth opportunities

he General Board's Youth/Young dult Ministry Office is sponsoring a **outh ministry workshop** Nov. 20 at the Hagerstown Church of the Brethren in Hagerstown, Md. Keynote leader for the event is Mark Yaconelli, a well-known and popular speaker in youth ministry, who will address the topic "Youth and Spirituality." The fee is $10, which includes lunch.

For registration forms or more details, call Chris Douglas in the Youth/Young Adult Office at 800-323-8039, extension 297.

Camp Mack, in Milford, Ind., held its first **Alexander Mack Festival** on Oct. 2. The event celebrated the anniversary of the historical murals at the camp and highlighted Brethren heritage with guided tours throughout the day, along with music and storytelling.

A financial workshop for Michigan District pastors, designed to assist and educate Brethren clergy with financial management, was held Oct. 2 at Skyridge Church of the Brethren, Kalamazoo, Mich. Sponsored by Michigan District and the General Board's Area 2 Congregational Life Team, the workshop was based on the theme "How to Make the Money Work — A Practical Approach."

Leaders were Don Fecher, director of Employee Financial Services for Brethren Benefit Trust, and Ken Holderread, who retired this year as executive of Illinois/Wisconsin District. Fecher, who offers planning seminars nationwide to Brethren pastors and employees of Brethren organizations, discussed personal finance planning with a look toward retirement. Holderread described how to develop money management skills.

Staff changes

Carol Yeazell has resigned as district executive minister of Atlantic Southeast District, effective Dec. 31. Yeazell has served since January 1998 as half-time district executive minister and half-time General Board Congregational Life Team staff for Area 3. She will continue in the half-time CLT staff position. Yeazell's last day in the district office will be Dec. 14.

Richard M. Hanley, district executive minister of Western Plains District, has been called to serve also as district executive minister for Southern Plains District.

The Southern Plains and Western Plains districts have approved this joint staffing configuration to address the issues of wide geographic boundaries for the districts and limited financial resources. Hanley will be assisted by a district coordinating minister who will care for many of the administrative functions of both districts.

Regional district ministry advocates will also be called to serve in outlying areas of both districts assisting with pastoral placement, pastoral care, and congregational consultation.

Sandy Bosserman has been called as half-time district executive for Missouri/Arkansas District, effective Jan. 1. She has been serving as pastor of the Peace Valley Church of the Brethren for more than six years. She is a former General Board member and has just finished a term as a Standing Committee delegate from Missouri/Arkansas.

Bosserman lives with her husband, Maurice, in Peace Valley, Mo., where she will set up her office.

Spirituality

Coming home to our spiritual roots

Early Pietists showed Brethr the way to face today's worl

BY WALLACE B. LANDES, JR.

Brethren Historical Library and Archives

Brethren praying *at the 1876 Annual Meeting.*

It all started for us as Brethren when a few starved souls sought the spiritual nourishment they were lacking in the Reformed church in 18th-century Germany.

Exiting the established church, they found a spiritual guide in the person of Ernst Christoph Hochmann von Hochenau. An itinerant preacher and biblical teacher, Hochmann trekked through their homeland offering a hopeful message of spiritual refreshment. Wherever he went, he left behind core groups of enthusiastic listeners who yearned for more. Among those followers was Alexander Mack.

Hochmann's preaching provided the impetus for Mack and like-minded souls whose needs were simply not being met in the state churches (Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed) to look elsewhere. Clustering together, they formed what we might call a house church today. Church historians refer to this movement as Pietism, since their goal was an increase in devotion and piety. In these small groups, they sought to study the Bible, unaided by the presence of ordained clergy. The leader was the Holy Spirit, inspiring individuals who opened their hearts and minds to God's Living Word.

> *What would it feel like for Brethren to "come home" to their spiritual heritage? What does the hatrack look like on which we can hang our spiritual hats and feel secure, nurtured, and blessed?*

Earlier in history, Pietism influenced the Lutheran church from within. Philipp Jakob Spener had formed pious cell groups (*collegia pietatis*), but these groups were endorsed by the church, and relied on trained clergy to lead them. A later Pietist leader, Philipp Melanchthon, would help to cement Pietism's influence on Lutheranism in what church historians call "churchly Pietism."

Later Pietists, like Hochmann, were more radical in their views and teaching, as well as more critical of institutional religion. In short, they were separatists: they advocated separating from the state churches, sometimes referring to them in their preaching as the "fallen church," or as "Babylon," after the imagery of John's Revelation. Bible study and prayer were the essential components of these pious gatherings. Growing out of their meetings was a strong drive to spread the gospel, a desire to visibly live out the faith, and deep love for the world.

Separating from the state churches, and meeting without the guidance and supervision of clergy, these Radical Pietists posed a tremendous threat to the authority of organized religion. In some German provinces, civil authority was invoked to enforce the church's position. In other provinces, civil and ecclesiastical leaders were more tolerant.

The early Brethren fell into this category of radical, separatist Pietists. As part of what historians term the "Radical Reformation" (or the "left wing" of the Reformation), they sought greater reforms than Martin Luther or John Calvin had managed. They disdained the "sacraments" of the state churches, and spoke of "ordinances" instead. They took seriously the priesthood of all believers and were skeptical of the clergy whose faith was informed by the doctrine and dogma of the institutional church as taught in its seminaries and universities. They preferred a religion of the heart, a faith that engaged the full range of intellect and emotion, a faith that engendered passion.

Very early in the 1700s, Mack parted with Hochmann on certain teachings and principles. He and his band also desired some semblance of outward form, order, and discipline. Examining the Mennonites, whose founder, Menno Simons, was a former Catholic priest and reformer in his own right, they adopted a number of their ideals and practices, including adult (believers') baptism. Groups that baptized adults were also labeled as a threat to the state churches that practiced infant baptism. Sects that taught and practiced adult baptism were labeled "rebaptizers" or Anabaptists. In a daring act in August of 1708, Mack led seven other like-minded people who formed a covenant and were baptized in the Eder River at Schwarzenau, Germany. In this event, a unique marriage took place between Pietism's inner life of devotion and Anabaptism's outward life of faith.

A number of Brethren scholars contend that this unity has forged an abiding creative tension (see Carl Bowman's *Brethren Society*). In the 1960s, this "marriage" had been referred to by Dale Brown and Vernard Eller as a "dialectical" relationship. Some of us persist in believing that these two strains of church history are still tugging at each other in a meaningful dialog that continues to inform our denomination's faith and life, as well as its work and witness.

Of course, the pendulum swings back and forth when it comes to emphasizing one aspect of our heritage over another. For example, coming out of the 1960s, many Brethren had exhausted their inner resources doing battle with the powers and principalities over social issues such as the Vietnam War, the war against poverty, and the civil rights movement. At the point where many were ready to turn inward and replenish their spiritual fortitude, the charismatic (neo-pentecostal) movement came along. It didn't feel like "home" to many Brethren, and, accordingly, they did not take up residence therein. Instead of generally helping us become conversant in the life of the Spirit, or aiding us in comparing notes about our spiritual growth, the pentecostal experience discouraged conversation and, in many ways, further delayed the needed spiritual revival. While not a few Brethren prospered spiritually under the charismatic influence, many more were simply turned off.

My own assessment is that our pietist history had, for several decades, been upstaged by our anabaptist heritage. The "outer life" of Christian faith, that is, the works, service, witness, and social conscience of Brethren, received considerable attention while the "inner life," the life of piety, devotion, and spiritual formation, received short shrift.

In response to a call for attention to spirituality, between 1981 and 1983 General Board programming included an office on spiritual life, filled first by staff person Matthew Meyer and later Robert Bowman. Their efforts included the establishment of the Spiritual Life Task Team, a sort of think-tank and speakers' bureau for spirituality. While this official effort was short-lived, it almost certainly marks the point at which the trend began reversing itself.

In decades since, increasing attention has been given to our pietist roots and less to our anabaptist grounding. In other words, the pendulum began to swing back, with more and more Brethren focusing on the inner life.

Much is happening. Some individuals are pursuing their own spiritual formation and some, in turn, are providing guidance and instruction to others. People like me are engaging in semi-scholarly or scholarly research in the area of Brethren and spirituality. Increasingly, Brethren are exploring the history of Christian spirituality, with many visiting Roman Catholic or Episcopalian retreat centers, or attending spiritual institutes of other denominations. Often they find themselves returning to their own roots in Pietism. The biggest learning of the journey is the realization that "there's no place like home."

What would it feel like for Brethren to "come home" to their spiritual heritage? What does the hatrack look like on which we can hang our spiritual hats and feel secure, nurtured, and blessed?

A quick survey of our origins suggests that our spiritual residence would be furnished with, at least, the following:

- intentional Bible study;
- personal prayer and devotion;
- spiritual friendship;
- a desire to relate one's inner, spiritual life to one's daily, practical life;
- a desire to enhance the devotional life within our existing Christian fellowships, congregations, or communities; and
- a desire to share the good news we discover with others toward the redemption of the world.

Rediscovery of our spiritual heritage in Pietism is crucial to our renewal as a denomination. It seems to naturally follow that the re-establishment of pious cell groups would be exactly what the doctor ordered. People of the Covenant, a denominational program begun in the 1980s, was the closest thing to Pietism's cell groups to come along in a good while. Unfortunately, the General Board recently ended the program and Brethren Press has subsequently curtailed production of new titles in the Covenant Bible Studies series.

If the recovery of our pietist heritage would speak to the restlessness, individualism, and spiritual confusion of Brethren in the postmodern era, why didn't people flock to this program? If spiritual growth groups could provide an answer to so many of the ills—personal and corporate—facing our denomination and its members, why then didn't it spread like wildfire?

I posed this question to Christina Bucher, chair of the religious studies department at Elizabethtown College and, at the time, biblical consultant for People of the Covenant. She noted that People of the Covenant has made a lasting impression on the lives of many Brethren and that its resources were shared beyond our ranks (the Disciples of Christ joined the program and purchased Covenant Bible Studies from Brethren Press). She also pointed out that it was never meant to be a sweeping attempt to engage all Brethren or all congregations, yet was supported fairly well for 14 years. While it was not a panacea, it made a significant contribution to the Church of the Brethren.

Convinced as I am that the secret to our future lies rooted in our past, it is as yet unclear to me what form or shape spiritual renewal will take. If it does not resemble the Bible study, prayer, and personal sharing groups of People of the Covenant, what will it look like?

We may, perhaps, draw some inferences from what is already happening. At University Baptist and Brethren church in State College, Pa., pastor Glenn Mitchell is forming spiritual growth groups for congregational members. A recent graduate of the spiritual direction program of Oasis Spiritual Ministries, and now a member of Oasis' teaching staff, Mitchell believes that we can rediscover our spiritual heritage as Brethren through intentional focus on spiritual growth and development in a small group format.

Drawing on our 13-year relationship as prayer partners, as well as formal training, Dick Shreckhise and I have taught courses in spiritual friendship both for the Susquehanna Valley Satellite of Bethany Seminary and the School of the Spirit, which is a ministry of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends. John and Phyllis Carter host a retreat center, Quiet Place, on the grounds of Camp Mack. Paul Grout is exploring the intersection of spirituality and the fine arts [see June MESSENGER]. Others are expanding their spiritual life through journaling, pottery, art, retreats, and pilgrimages, as well as the traditional disciplines of prayer, scripture study, fasting, meditation, contemplation, and service.

Phyllis Carter observes, "Religion and spirituality have become untwined. Many people visiting our center are very religious persons, but are unchurched." The failure of the institutional church to nurture and nourish the faithful is repeating itself in history. And, once again, the people of God are finding vitality apart from organized religion, often in centers of pious devotion.

Clearly, the goal is not for either aspect of our heritage, pietist or anabaptist, to gain ascendency or predominance. . . .

It is encouraging to note how themes of spiritual formation and spiritual direction are also returning to theological education after a long hiatus. The emphasis on the pastoral care movement in the middle decades of this century yielded a crop of pastors ready to provide "pastoral psychotherapy," or to engage parishioners in therapeutic pastoral conversation. Those of us schooled in that era soon discovered that, in actual parish practice, individuals came to the pastor seeking the input or the angle that they could not find in consulting physicians, counselors, or psychiatrists: the faith dimension. Having in one's pastoral hip pocket a general overview of psychology and psychotherapy often proved valuable in helping individuals. However, we discovered that our primary calling as pastors was going neglected. Parishioners came to us looking for spiritual counsel, biblical grounding for their faith journey, prayerful support, and the administration of those rituals that open our spirits to the mysteries of God's grace at work in life, especially the anointing service. Little in our formal training for ministry prepared us to meet such needs.

The lack of specific training in spiritual formation is being corrected. During the 1980s, Bethany Seminary witnessed a significant shift in student interest and an attending shift in seminary curriculum in this area. Prayer and spiritual life were suddenly in vogue, but hardly in a faddish way. In the field, many pastors were exploring the varied dimensions of spiritual self-care. Such movements as these provide significant evidence that our roots in pious devotion are being taken more seriously than has been true for some time.

Clearly, the goal is not for either aspect of our heritage, pietist or anabaptist, to gain ascendency or predominance, but for each influence to speak to us deliberately, yielding the best of the "inward" and "outward" aspects of Christian faith. We do well to recall the words of Vernard Eller who, in a 1961 *Brethren Life and Thought* article entitled "On Epitomizing the Brethren," described the dialectic at work in our Brethren "bones": "When the Radical Pietist tendency would slide off into subjectivism, private inspiration, mysticism, enthusiasm, or vaporous spiritualism, it is pulled up short by the demand for concrete, outward obedience to an objective scriptural norm. Conversely, when the Anabaptist tendency would slide off into formalism, biblical literalism, or works-righteousness, it is checked by the reminder that faith is essentially a work of God within the heart of the individual believer, an intensely personal relationship rather than a legal one. Thus within Brethrenism, Anabaptist influences discipline Pietism as the same Pietism influences inspire Anabaptism."

So what does it mean to be Pietists who face the moral chaos, rampant consumerism, ecological devastation, and general decadence of postmodern America? I believe our historical roots give the answer. Our origins in Bible study and devotion in the context of small groups of brothers and sisters provide the kind of pegs on which we Brethren can hang our hats in the new millennium and feel quite at home. Poised on the threshold of a new era, we can celebrate the way in which God's spirit is working in the hearts, minds, and souls of many Brethren who are intent on helping us find our way to our spiritual home!

Wally Landes is senior pastor of the Palmyra (Pa.) Church of the Brethren, which he has served for 14 years. A native of Waynesboro, Va., he is a 1974 graduate of Bridgewater College and a 1978 graduate of Bethany Theological Seminary. In 1998 he received the doctor of ministry degree from Princeton Theological Seminary. His thesis project was entitled "Radical Pietism and Contemporary Religious Experience." Excerpts of this study were recently published in a double issue of Brethren Life and Thought.

Spirituality

Journaling

Recording the inward journey

BY GAYLE HUNTER SHELLER

Glenn Mitchell

Through journaling *we take time to listen to our own spirits and to God. Pictured is Kimber Mitchell, of Boalsburg, Pa.*

> *. . . we have a long and crippling legacy in our own system of thought of believing in the external world much more deeply than we believe in the internal world. . . .* —Quaker teacher Parker Palmer, *Leading From Within*

How easily life becomes defined by a stream of outward action. Service is valued in the Church of the Brethren tradition—life is in giving one's self away, "losing life to find it."

What we may forget, however, is the devotional depth of those whose vision shaped us, the inner life of prayer and encounter with scripture that led to radical discipleship.

Sixteen years ago, a Wellspring retreat led by members of the Church of the Saviour, Washington D.C., helped remind me of the necessary balance between the inward journey and the outward journey of the Christian life.

Elizabeth O'Connor, chronicler of the Church of the Saviour, in her book titled *Journey Inward, Journey Outward*, names three engagements of the spiritual life: engagement with self, with others, and with God. She writes of the engagement with self: "As people on an inward journey we are committed to . . . becoming people in touch with our real selves, so that we know not only what flows at the surface, but what goes on in the depths of us."

A number of tools have been helpful to me on the inward journey, including silent retreat, spiritual direction, and journaling. Keeping a journal has been a special part of this ongoing dialog with life, and in it I ask all sorts of questions. We tend not to honor our own questions as necessary to faithful-

(continued on p. 18)

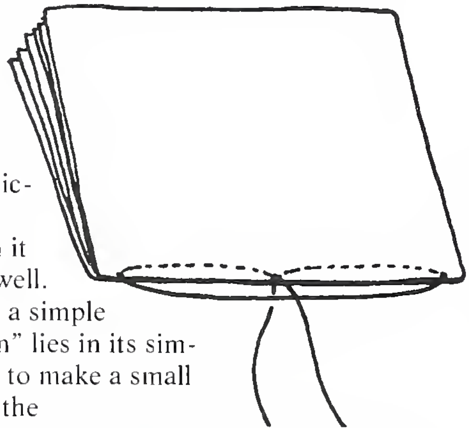
Creating a journal for the sacred text of our lives

Christina Baldwin, in her delightful book on journaling called *Life's Companion*, tells the story of going at age 12 to see a play on Anne Frank. She was so moved by the story of Anne journaling her life that she went home and started a journal herself.

She relates: "I took a black, cardboard three-ring notebook down to the basement, drilled a hole at its edge with my father's drill bit, inserted blank pages, and locked it with my gym padlock. . . I had made a journal and a secret annex for myself and I began to write."

My first journals were little different than Christina's—spiral-bound theme books bought in the early 70s for 49 cents. As keeping a journal became more important in my life as a seeker on the Christian path, I began to use hardbound sketch books as journals. More recently I started to make my own journals—hardbound and hand-stitched, often covered with paper I've made from the fibers of garden plants. The design and embellishments on each of these journals speaks of that particular time in my life, even as the words within reveal the period in detail.

If our journals are the containers for the sacred text of our lives then it seems an added grace that the container be a reflection of ourselves as well. There are many methods for binding handmade books. Included here is a simple stitch for creating a softbound book. The beauty of this "pamphlet stitch" lies in its simplicity and its suitability for books of varying size. I often use this stitch to make a small book I carry in my shirt pocket, always ready to receive the words from the moment that my memory can't hold. But it can also be used to bind together larger pages for recording the spiritual stirrings in your life.



Pamphlet stitch shown *prior to tightening and tying double knot.*

Step 1. This design uses pages that are folded in half. Decide on the size you would like the finished book to be and the number of pages you want. I'd suggest beginning with no more than 30 sheets—which when folded will give you a book with 120 pages. I limit pocket-sized books to 12 pages.

Standard copy paper (8½ x 11) would give you a book, 8½ inches high and 5½ inches wide. If you want a full letter-size page journal, buy 11 x 17 paper.

2. Choose a cover paper. This paper should be heavy enough to lend some protection to the text pages and needs to be about a half inch longer and a quarter inch wider than your full text sheets. Art supply stores often carry a selection of heavier paper you can cut to size. The choice of cover paper—and possibly a drawing, collage, or photo added to it— is where your own creativity can emerge before it takes shape on the text pages.

3. Fold the stack of your selected pages in half, typically along the longest length. Crease the fold flat with a blunt object like the handle of a wooden spoon.

4. Fold in half the cover page but don't crease it. It will then take the rounded shape of the folded text block.

5. Place the folded text pages inside the folded cover, and center them top to bottom.

6. Spread the "book" open to its center with the cover side face down on a board. With an awl or ice pick punch three holes along the crease line through all the pages and the cover. One hole in the center, one a half inch or so in from the top, and up from the bottom.

7. To sew use a tapestry needle and heavy rug thread or cord. Thread should be at least 2½ times the height of the book. Begin stitching from the outside of the middle hole, pass the needle and thread through the cover and all the text pages to the center of the open book. Leave several inches of tail. Go up the inside to the top hole and pass the needle from inside to the outside. Come down along the outside spine, go by the center hole to the bottom hole, and stitch to the inside again. Come up along the inside crease to the middle hole and go back out the same hole you first came in. With thread tails on either side of the spine thread, snug down all the stitching and finish with a double knot tied over and around the thread passing along the outside spine. Trim ends as you like and you are finished.

Enjoy journaling in a book that has come together with your hands! —Glenn Mitchell

Glenn Mitchell has been keeping a journal since college and has been making his own journals for the last four years.

(continued from p. 16)

ness, but articulating the questions that arise in us, like, "Why do I resist doing what gives me life?" or "What is the root of this grief?" prepares us for the One who asks us the questions that stir our hearts. Much of Jesus' ministry of healing began with questions.

O'Connor writes, "Having put our questions to ourselves, we need to trust the answers that come from within, so that we are not always demanding from others what must be discovered by tilling and tending the soil of our own lives."

This becomes the added benefit of journaling: We take time to listen to our own spirits and to God. And then we come to community, and to call, richer and clearer for the inner work we have done.

I invite you to consider the practice of keeping a journal, and offer some cautions and suggestions along the way. Remember, this practice is not about writing skills. Many of us carry an editor-critic in our heads. We have to tell that voice to go on a long vacation and let us be the creative, original selves we each are. Anything goes in a journal! In fact, I make sure to use a book without lines so that I can doodle, write big complaints or small revelations.

You don't even have to go back and read what you wrote. It is the engagement itself that matters, the paying attention. It is the ordering of chaos, the sifting of impulse, the listening to whispered thoughts that is the mark of the spirit at work in us. Writer Madeleine L'Engle rarely goes back to read past journal entries. No one, not even you, need judge the work of your journal.

Another important note: Your journal is absolutely private. What is written there is the unedited work of your heart and soul and you need not wonder what someone else would think. Our sons began journals at young ages, and we let them know their inner thoughts were sacred ground. Our journals are often the repository of confession, a place where we test ideas, where we examine our faith journey, which is always in process.

The first commitment when choosing to journal is making time apart, even when finding time is difficult. Taking time is the first step to honoring the inner life. I often journal following my time of silence, prayer, and devotional reading. Whether full or empty, it is good work to find words for my experience.

Through my journal, I became aware my inner life has seasons. During some seasons the dialog quickly fills a journal, while at other times the ground is fallow and words come slowly. I have learned to honor the seasons, not to force what needs time to take root.

Finally, I invite you to bring your own aesthetics to the practice of journaling. I gift my inner work by choosing a book I find beautiful to look at and to handle. There are a variety of lovely blank books available. Among the most affordable are bound artists' sketchbooks. Experiment with size and style (I prefer spiral bindings because the books lie open easily). Choose a book you will enjoy using, or make your own (see sidebar).

Also choose a writing tool that is comfortable and easy in your hand. For me, the tactile experience of pen on paper, and the slower flow of the hand-written word, contribute to the meditative, listening quality of my journal time.

Some ways to begin: Sit with some devotional reading and write about what quickens or comforts your heart. Write prayers as letters to God. Explore a place of pain and a place of joy at this moment in your life. Meditate on the most poetic and wonderful of journals, the Psalms, for in these songs of praise, petition, complaint, and confession reside a window into the struggle, despair, hope, and ultimate grace of the inward journey.

Gayle Hunter Sheller, of Springfield, Ore., is ordained in the Church of the Brethren and the Mennonite Church. She is pastor of Eugene Mennonite Church. She offers workshops on journaling and has been leading silent retreats for the past 15 years.

Brethrening

Summer camp concerns

One day in the 1930s two young wives of pastors were waiting for their husbands, who were in an elders meeting. Suddenly the door opened. The men burst out, grabbed their wives, and hustled them away. When they were out of sight of the building the men fell to the ground, laughing so long and heartily that their wives thought they were crazy.

At last they explained that the elders had been considering a request to have summer youth camp—a new idea in that southern area. After much discussion in the meeting it became clear that the area of most concern among the elders was coed swimming. Finally, one old elder had said, "Brothers, it will be all right. They'll be in the water and that will cool down any passions!"
—EVELYN M. FRANTZ, *Harrisburg, Pa.*

The primary work *of both the one seeking direction and the director is being prayerfully present to God. The author, a trained spiritual director, speaks with Sharon Shane.*

Spiritual direction

Finding help to hear God's voice in your life

BY GLENN MITCHELL

Rachel sat in my office and reviewed what had been happening in her life. It had been a difficult month. The tension with her co-worker was only getting worse. Rachel was giving serious consideration to changing jobs because of it. Her oldest son had gotten into trouble at school and the counselor was suggesting they seek some help. Her mother's health continued to decline and Rachel and her brother were meeting soon to make some decisions about next steps in her care. There was a lot on her plate and, not surprisingly, the stress was beginning to show in Rachel's life.

Though this Rachel does not exist in my world, her stories do. There are many ways that I could respond as a pastor to the stories the Rachels in my ministry share with me. The helper side of me, in such moments of receiving, sees many possibilities for the engagement of my ministry. There are many facets of her dilemma that could be explored. But, if Rachel were seeing me for spiritual direction, she would most likely hear from me questions like these:

"How do you find yourself praying these difficult situations?"

"Are you sensing any invitation from God in the midst of all you are experiencing right now?"

"Is there a particular scripture that has come to you as you struggle through these difficulties?"

The working assumption in spiritual direction is that God is always present and active. The ministry of spiritual direction is not dependent upon the condition of our daily lives—whether our current situation is full of bliss or woe, or whether we feel that things are coming together or falling apart. In direction the discernment of God's presence and our relationship with God is what emerges as the crucial focus regarding our state of being and our wellspring of action. In all the seasons of our lives, our task of turning to God in our living—in moments ordinary and extraordinary—is the grace spiritual direction seeks. Whether Rachel stays with her job or not, how can this crisis open her to a deeper walk with God? Whatever they decide about intervention for her son, or the best care for her mother, how is she praying the angst of her situation? How might the suffering of Christ be coming alive for her in the midst of her own struggles?

Spiritual direction is an ancient practice in the church that is experiencing a revival in recent years. In its most simple form it is one person seeking out another to share the stories of his or her faith journey. Though spiritual direction is the traditional term used for this ministry, there is little "directing" involved in the sense of telling others what to do or how to pray. The real director is understood to be the Holy Spirit. The ministry of spiritual direction is sometimes described by other terms, such as spiritual guide, spiritual companion, soul friend, or spiritual friendship—the latter implying a more mutual process of spiritual sharing between two people. Spiritual direction can also be experienced in small groups structured to provide a prayerful atmosphere for individuals to take turns sharing and receiving the guiding questions and feedback of others.

Whether done one to one or in a small group, spiritual direction is a process anchored in prayer. We are familiar with models of caregiving and support where the important thing is being empathetically present to the other. In spiritual direction, the primary work of both the one seeking direction and the director is being prayerfully present to God. This posture is rooted in the assumption that our prayerfulness is often the greatest gift we can bring to another. Such prayerfulness helps the director keep the focus on the director's availability to God and the spiritual life of the other, rather than on trying to help fix the problems the other is experiencing. In the ministry of direction, there is both the clarity of the other being responsible for her or his own walk with God, and the comforting assurance that the director is seeking God with and for the other.

As the 14th-century mystic Julian of Norwich said of such prayer, "I look to God. I look to the other. I look back to God."

Although approaches to direction vary from director to director, some common commitments are:

- to meet together on a monthly basis for an hour to an hour and a half.
- to begin sessions with prayer (silent or spoken) and maintain a spirit of prayer throughout.
- to hold the other in prayer between sessions.
- to continue to practice whatever spiritual disciplines one is called to practice. Examples are prayer, scripture reading, service, and keeping a journal.
- to honestly and openly share one's spiritual journey with another.
- to maintain confidentiality.

Such an intentional pattern of faith sharing may be new to the Brethren, but the spirit of it is certainly not alien to our pietist and anabaptist heritage. Both traditions understand the importance of walking together in our faith journeys. The Church of the Brethren was born in the recognition of how critical it is that we be accountable in our faith with brothers and sisters. One of the things I hear over and over from individuals choosing to enter spiritual direction is the deep gift they receive from sharing their experiences of God and prayer with another. I commonly hear statements like this:

"I have not told anyone about my experiences in prayer before. I feared I was alone in this, but I'm beginning to trust how important my desire for God is in my life."

Or: "I find that since we've begun talking about my spiritual life I return to prayer more often in the midst of my day. Prayer is no longer just what I do before meals or at bedtime, but I find myself praying without consciously choosing to pray. It has brought a greater peace to my day."

The aim of spiritual direction is that persons might have a greater awareness of God and respond more fully to God's presence through all aspects of their lives. Like Rachel, we don't always have much choice about what comes to us on a given day, but we can choose to continue to turn to God in the midst of our days, fostering a greater connection with the One who abides with us throughout our lives.

Glenn Mitchell is pastor of University Baptist and Brethren Church, State College, Pa.

Finding a spiritual director

Spiritual friendship can be established between any two people who share a desire for God and who are willing to pray, to speak openly of their faith journey, to meet regularly, and to maintain confidentiality. If you intersperse praying with times of sharing and gentle questioning, it will keep the focus on the spiritual life of the one sharing. There are a number of books available to help in this process of mutual sharing. See Wendy Miller's and Macrina Wiederkehr's books listed below.

To find someone trained in spiritual direction, talk to your pastor or district executive about those in the church or district who might have this ministry. Catholics and Episcopalians have a long tradition of direction, and may provide helpful leads for you as well. Spiritual retreat centers often offer direction, along with settings for retreat. In addition, there are many training programs in spiritual direction (see the few listed below) that can share the names of graduates in your area.

Training in spiritual direction is possible in both academic and non-academic settings. Because of their depth of tradition in direction ministry, a number of Catholic colleges and retreat houses offer training programs. In addition, here are several ecumenical training programs:

Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation, 5430 Grosvenor Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814. E-mail: info@shalem.org. Web: www.shalem.org/index.html

Oasis Ministries for Spiritual Development, 419 Deerfield Road, Camp Hill, PA 17011. Tel.: 717-737-8222. E-mail: oasismin@iname.com. Web: www.libertynet.org/~oasismin

School for Spiritual Formation—Mennonite program. Contact Wendy Miller at Eastern Mennonite University. E-mail: millerwj@emu.edu

Additional reading

Barry, William, and Connolly, William. *The Practice of Spiritual Direction.* HarperCollins.

Dougherty, Rose Mary. *Group Spiritual Direction.* Paulist Press. 1995.

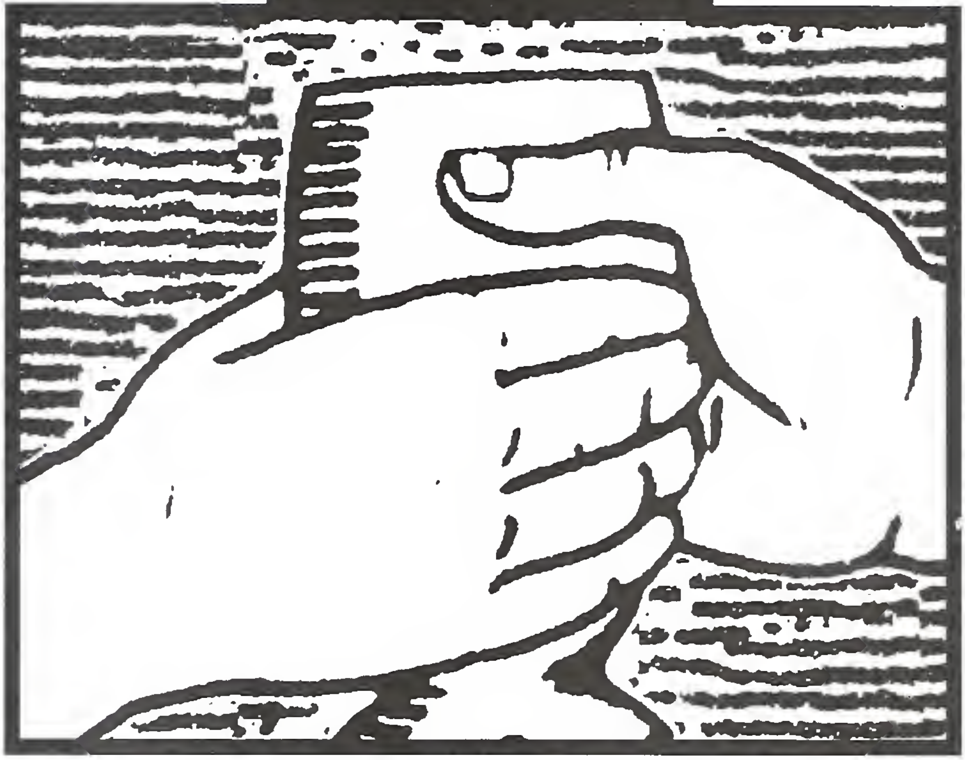
Edwards, Tilden. *Spiritual Friend.* Paulist Press. 1980.

Guenther, Margaret. *Holy Listening: The Art of Spiritual Direction.* Cowley Press. 1992.

May, Gerald G. *Care of Mind, Care of Spirit.* HarperCollins. 1982.

Miller, Wendy. *Learning to Listen: A Guide for Spiritual Friends.* Upper Room. 1993.

Wiederkehr, Macrina. *The Song of the Seed.* HarperCollins, 1995.



For reflection and action on mission

New resource packet focuses on mission education

BY RUSS MATTESON

Soon after Annual Conference this past summer, Church of the Brethren pastors received the first installment of a new congregational resource from the denomination's General Board: ". . .in our midst." The inaugural piece brought together several items related to spiritual growth and provided encouragement for congregations to explore this aspect of their life, from worship and devotional practices, to spiritual direction, to the manner in which they conduct their business.

Howard Royer, General Board staff for interpretation, and one of the persons helping to coordinate this resource, says the vision for the ". . . in our midst" series is to "provide a cohesive set of resources, not provided by any one program but representing the fullness of General Board ministries, that showcases issues in a way that helps congregations to get into them."

Each year will bring about four packets dealing with everything from worship resources to tough issues that the church is facing.

The newest packet, focused on mission education, is a good example of how these resources can help a congregation seek out its own direction as well as connect to the life of the wider church. Sections in the packet include articles on what mission means, worship, sermon and bulletin resources, the 1981 and 1989 Annual Conference Statements on Mission, a multi-session study guide for congregational use, and an article that helps congregations think about how they can use these resources.

"The cultural situation is changing so fast today, the North American cultural context is changing, and we as human beings are forced to live in so many worlds at once," says Shantilal Bhagat, staff consultant for Global Mission Partnerships and primary author of the mission resources. His goal was to provide a resource that would help members and churches ask the kinds of questions that would help them become the missional body of Christ in their community.

"We looked at what we have said in the 1981 and 1989 Annual Conference statements on mission and they are very good, very relevant to today. The statements are grounded in scripture and provide a solid foundation for reflection and action. The resources formed around these."

The study encourages churches to think about how they are to critique the culture around them, to identify their mission fields, and to take action as a missional church, through Bible study and case studies that are included in the resources.

"The church is called to be a body of people sent on a mission," Bhagat reminds us, "not a storefront for vendors of religious services and the goods of North American culture. We are a part of the world's mission field."

Still to come in 1999 is a packet focusing on children and violence. That packet will include a video segment featuring David Grossman, former Army psychologist, talking about how our culture desensitizes young people to the act of killing. Early in 2000 the series will provide worship ideas and resources for living in the season of Lent and Easter.

These resources come to life as congregations and members dig into them, explore the concerns that are raised, and come to a deeper awareness that God is in our midst as we live out the call to be the church. M.

Russ Matteson is Brethren Press manager of marketing and sales. Additional copies of the mission education materials can be ordered from Brethren Press at 800-441-3712.

The dream by

Imagining the Church of th

by Howard E. Royer

What is your dream for the Church of the Brethren in the 21st century? What ought Brethren hold fast to and what ought Brethren strive to change? What are the marks of a faithful church in a new day?

Authors Ben Campbell Johnson and Glenn McDonald in *Imagining a Church in the Spirit: A Task for Mainline Congregations* (Eerdmans, September 1999, $16) contend that the greatest problem facing mainline churches today is not declining numbers, shifting social allegiances, or confused leadership; it is the loss of vision. "We have been blinded to the living Christ among us," Johnson and McDonald assert.

To encourage Brethren in the discernment of vision, MESSENGER invites its readers to submit their dream, in 100 words or less, for the Church of the Brethren in the new millennium. Early in 2000 MESSENGER will publish the statements, as fully as space allows.

A preview of what Brethren hold for the future came at the Milwaukee Annual Conference, sparked by the General Board exhibit. Drawing on lyrics posted from a Kenneth Morse hymn, "O God of Mystery," 130 in *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, the exhibit featured as its theme these lines:

O grant us grace
to reach, to give,
To touch the dream
by which we live.

Conferencegoers were invited to write and post the dream by which they live—their vision of the Church of the Brethren in the future. Here is a sampling of responses:

* * *

As followers of Jesus Christ, let us love our sisters and brothers who are in the church and those who are not yet in the church. Let us seek ways of sharing our faith with people of every land including those very close to us. Let us communicate our faith to those who do not know Jesus Christ in our serving the needs of all.

I see many needs for justice, peace, and personal integrity as we seek to bring all our sisters and brothers into the family of Jesus Christ

E. Paul Weaver, Everett, Pa.

* * *

That Brethren be willing to invest their lives for peace with more commitment to the cause of peace than those who are committed to war. That we be willing to go into the world and into harm's way by the thousands, not to participate in war but, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to stop it. In essence, that we really become a peace church.

Rusty Dinkins-Curling, Portland, Ore.

which we live

Brethren in the 21st century

* * *

My dream is that the Church of the Brethren continues its ecumenical presence in the world, epitomizing our "Peacefully. Simply. Together" in a way that leaves no doubt about who we are and what we believe, with an openness to inclusivity for all.

Sue Snyder, Phoenix, Ariz.

* * *

My dream is that we not try to fit the mainstream model of church, but embrace what makes Brethren different. That we truly become a denomination that lives out the gospel by embracing ALL people, welcoming them into arms of love and acceptance. That we live out the Messianic banquet.

Jean Keith, Douglas Park church, Chicago, Ill.

* * *

I pray that the Church of the Brethren will continue to work ecumenically for justice and peace—in America and in the world. That we will look at the causes of injustice and unpeace, especially consumerism. That we will admit that white, middle-class Americans are a large part of the problem. That we will pray to change our attitudes and thus our world for God.

Julie Liggett, Western Plains District, Denver, Colo.

* * *

I hope that some day the Church of the Brethren will become a culturally diverse organization and will be famously known all over the world as a "Good Samaritan" to everyone in need.

L. N. Montauban, First Haitian church, Brooklyn, N.Y.

* * *

My dream is that the Church of the Brethren will continue to be pioneers in openness to the revelations and understanding of our Maker that are all around us, if we have eyes to see and ears to hear.

Lois Clark, Prince of Peace church, South Bend, Ind.

* * *

My dream for the Church of the Brethren is that we are a church where everybody is welcomed to explore a relationship with God through Christ as empowered by the Holy Spirit. A place where seekers can find:

—a community of believers who will love and care for them,
—a place where peacemaking skills are taught,
—a place where biblical truth is an encouragement to men and women, and where it is taught as the way to live simply, peacefully, together.

In short that we, the Church of the Brethren, become a fellowship of *living faith.*

J. P. Freeman, Living Faith church, Carrol Co., Ind.

* * *

My dream is that we keep the wonderful heritage of service, simplicity, and peace, but that we move beyond it to be known as those who speak about personal faith. "See how they love one another" should be heard about us, as well as "He/she showed me how to change my life."

Linda Alley, Bridgewater church, Bridgewater, Va.

* * *

I pray that the Church of the Brethren will become a multicultural, multiracial church, respecting, loving, and learning from one another, with decision making shared by all.

Gerald W. Rhoades, First church, Harrisburg, Pa.

What is your dream?

Early in 2000, MESSENGER will publish a collection of readers' dreams for the Church of the Brethren in the 21st century. In 100 words or less, set forth your vision, and include your name, city, and congregation. Send it to "Dreams," MESSENGER, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120. Or e-mail to ffarrar_gb@brethren.org.

FORUM ON THE NAME

The July MESSENGER editorial proposed a new name for the Church of the Brethren. Here are responses from readers.

Frank Ramirez

HOPEFULLY ARCHAIC

Toward the end of Carl Bowman's book *Brethren Society*, the movement to change the name of our denomination was explored. Bowman made the point that with regards to the term "Brethren," no denomination, regardless of name changes, had ever removed the central identifying word and survived. There are many flavors of Lutherans, Methodists, Mennonites, Baptists, and of course Brethren. Bowman suggested in not so many words that Brethren are stuck with the term Brethren.

Partway through the discussion, Bowman quoted an author who suggested that perhaps, as we approached the end of our third century, we might consider ourselves a young denomination. Perhaps, the author suggested, it was time to shed our teenaged name and pick "our grownup name" (p. 396).

My first response was, "What sort of marshmallow would write that sort of thing?" Fortunately, Bowman's book is heavily annotated. I looked up the footnote and discovered the name of the author. It was me. (That's part of the price I pay for living with short-term memory loss. I can't possibly remember most of what I've written.)

I looked up the original article, which appeared as an opinion piece ("Test-Market A New Name") in the November 1992 issue of MESSENGER. The intent of the piece was to suggest that it would be a mistake to initiate a change in our denomination's name by committee or fiat. While reminding the readers we'd been the Church of the Brethren for less than a century, I added that even if there were pressure on the part of some to change our name because of gender considerations, an imposed name would never be fully accepted. It would be better, I suggested, for individual churches to experiment with new names, if such were desired. If something worked at the grassroots level it would quickly be adopted by the denomination as a whole. If something didn't work, then no harm.

I still feel the same way, even as dialog begins to resume on the perceived necessity of a name change. I understand why the term "Brethren" makes some of our membership uncomfortable. I sympathize, and in part agree, with their qualms. I try to be careful about inclusive language.

But consider two points. First, one advantage to the term "brethren" is precisely that it is patently out of step. It is anachronistic, perhaps even archaic. This is a good thing. C.S. Lewis once made the point that whatever is not eternal is eternally out of date. If we were to devise a name for ourselves that is patently relevant it would have an extraordinarily short shelf life. Writers learn this pretty quickly because editors try to talk them out of using current terminology. It doesn't last. We're not "with it" anymore. "Out of sight" is out of sight. "Heavy" lacks khavod as a descriptive term.

Indeed, we laugh at people who use antiquated terminology. I have to laugh at the recent efforts of soft drink hucksters who try to convince us that there is something extraordinarily fresh and relevant about their products. They've all been around for decades and they keep changing their jingles and slogans to convince us they're the next new thing.

The fact is that people, as one soft drink manufacturer discovered, really want the same old thing they can trust. They don't want new products. They want the tried and true.

The term "Brethren" has some history behind it. It shows we were around before political correctness —and fundamentalism, and liberalism, and conservatism, and a lot of other isms—and that we're going to be around a while yet.

C.S. Lewis encouraged us to be adherents of "mere" Christianity, and to pay less attention to those elements that distract and divide us. The use of "Brethren" shows we have no interest in being with it. Instead, we are with God, and with each other.

The second point has to do with words. Whenever we get bogged down in words it shows we are straying from our pietist and anabaptist roots. Even though we are the people of the Book, our emphasis will always be on what we do, not what we say. Words are cheap. Action demonstrates faith. This is not a call to salvation through works. But it is a reminder that language can get in the way of what is obvious.

Both the fundamentalist and the politically correct liberal require others to say particular words in order to demonstrate orthodoxy. These statements depend upon word and not action to demonstrate faith. That is true whether we call ourselves Dunkers, Brethren, or the Covenant of Brothers and Sisters in Christ. Anabaptists are true to following Jesus. We act out our faith. We stand true. We don't change swiftly. We're not part of anyone else's orthodoxy. We are Christians.

The greatest admiration on the modern American scene is reserved for those who change most slowly— the old orders, including the Amish. This is not to suggest we should still be driving buggies or wearing the plain garb. CROP, Heifer Project, and the Brethren Service Center at New Windsor were all founded by Brethren, who were less concerned with procedure and lines of accountability and especially words, and more with getting things done.

It's like the parable of Jesus in which he mentioned a father with two sons. One said he'd get the job done when asked but he never got around to it. Another refused, yet performed the will of his father. Deeds, not words, are the proof that faith is living.

What we are called is not as important as seeing who we are and what we're about. We're Brethren. We're out of step. Deliberately. For heaven's sake, we wash feet, even though it embarrasses the heck out of some people, because that's what the Bible says we should do. Our word is our bond. We're not with it, relevant, groovy, heavy, boss, or phat, for that matter. We're throwbacks to an era of faithfulness and action, an anabaptist communion tainted with the pietist concern for authenticity. As such we must be about the business of Jesus.

Frank Ramirez is pastor of the Elkhart Valley Church of the Brethren, Elkhart, Ind.

Tom Devers

CHURCHES NOT STRONG ON PEACE

You presented some valid reasons for a name change for the Church of the Brethren in your July editorial. I cannot agree with you that a change is needed.

I have always felt that the name brethren in regards to the Church of the Brethren was referring to all members of the church. It never occurred to me it was only referring to the men. The *World Book Dictionary* states the meaning of brethren as "the fellow members of a church, society, or religious order."

The suggestion from Jay Gibble of the name Covenant Peace Church is an honorable one but it does not address the fact that some churches within the denomination are not strong in their beliefs that would normally be associated with the word peace. A reexamination of where all your churches are in terms of their basic beliefs might be called for instead.

Dropping the German Baptist portion of the name generated considerable debate in its time. But what is being proposed here is more or less creating a new identity that would be hard pressed to find a link with the beginnings of the church in 1708.

Tom Devers is from Union, Ohio.

Robert E. Fletcher

SUNDAY SCHOOL CONSENSUS

For a number of years, our Sunday school class has used MESSENGER articles as weekly discussion topics. Recently, our discussion was based on your July editorial concerning the perennial issue of renaming our denomination. Our consensus was clearly to stick with the name which has served through most of this century, even if most people don't know who we are anyhow.

However, I cannot resist giving (with tongue somewhat in cheek), my own personal nominee for the "name-the-church" contest: "The Church of the Closely-Related People." I hope this will give more food for thought!

Robert E. Fletcher lives in Denton, Md.

Ron Martin-Adkins

FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

I favored a name change for the denomination when the subject came up several years ago. I have not changed my mind. At that time, I think I had a name to suggest, something like the Church of Christ's Followers. Now, as long as the new name is inclusive, I'll be happy.

Nowadays, I like Dunkers, because my Webster's *New Collegiate Dictionary* (1979 edition) defines Dunker as "a member of the Church of the Brethren or any of several other originally German Baptist denominations practicing trine immersion and love feasts and refusing to take oaths or to perform military service." A perfectly fine description of who we are as a denomination, I think.

For comparison, I looked up brethren: "plural of brother – used chiefly in formal or solemn address or in referring to the members of a profession, society, or sect." Then comes the one for us, with a capital, Brethren: (noun, plural) "members of various sects originating chiefly in 18th century German Pietism; especially: Dunkers."

Besides the way we have to redefine the word to make it fit us as Brethren, we are left with several problems with the definition, in addition to the obvious fact that the word means the plural of brother.

- It is used chiefly in formal and solemn address. But we are all for simplicity in speech as in other aspects of living, for letting our yes be yes and our no be no.
- It refers to members of a profession. But many of our members are not professionals, and, in those professions where the word used to be employed it has been replaced with more inclusive terminology.
- It refers to members of a society. But we learned to avoid such societies because they divided our loyalty, which should be to Christ and the church.
- It refers to members of a sect. But if that word applied to our ancestors in the faith, it no longer applies to who we are. It simply does not fit.

FORUM ON THE NAME

I thought about more names, modeling after the other historic peace churches with whom we usually identify. Alexanderites or MackRights? I don't think so. But parallels with the Friends/Quakers have interesting potential. After all, we share a campus with them and we already have the rather colloquial equivalent of Quaker in our own Dunker moniker. They have Friends Meetings; perhaps we could have Neighbors Meetings or Neighbors Church Meetings.

I thank you for opening the discussion and for connecting it to the goal of 2008.

I also have some uncomfortable thoughts about the name change of 1908. I wonder, for instance, that the decision was to drop both German and Baptist from the name but retain the Brethren portion. My speculation is that among some of the Brethren there was a conscious intent to distance themselves from things German, things Baptist, and things associated with the women's suffragis movement. The name should be changed.

Ron Martin-Adkins is a member of the Washington (D.C.) City Church of the Brethren.

Barbara and Dwight Enberg
A BLESSED SUGGESTION

Your editorial, "A new name for a new time," invited suggestions. Consider this one: Church of the Beatitudes.

The Enbergs live in Los Osos, Calif.

Dale W. Brown
"COVENANT" KEEPS IT IN THE FAMILY

The editor of *Femailings* (April 1994) was considerate in accepting my response to endeavors to change our denomination's name. As one who has acquired a strong identity with what the name implies, the article expressed my wish that a new name preserve the familial and communal nature of who we are.

Traditions with the same name such as Brethren in Christ and Mennonite Brethren claim the same pietist heritage of emotional warmth and caring concern for each member. The name has connotations of equality. Instead of reverend, it has been brother and sister. It was difficult to convince members to move the table to a raised platform. They were reluctant to accept preachers standing on higher ground than others.

However, we live in a time and culture in which meanings associated with the word brethren are different. My mother loved the word brethren and felt included. This is no longer the case with many dedicated members.

In the last five years I have become more sensitive to those who desire to change the name. Yet it has been easier for me to critique suggestions than think of a new name. For example, in my desire to be inclusive and not offend, I avoid using the word brotherhood. But it is difficult to find other words that express as well the nature of our extended family.

I am grateful for the editorial and Jay Gibble's suggestion [see "A new name for a new time," August]. The word covenant does it. It may be too theological for some. But it does embody what is basic to the Brethren, namely, that our covenant with God cannot be separated from our covenant with one another.

And this proposal is given remarkable historical support by Henry Kurtz. In the preface of his *Brethren's Encyclopedia*, published in 1867, he reflected on different opinions members have about the decisions of Annual or Yearly Meetings. Some esteem them too highly, he believed, regarding the rules and laws to be of "equal authority as divine writ" which "could not be altered." Others perhaps have too low an estimate, considering them as a bundle of human traditions, "which we cannot too soon forget and lay aside." Instead of being laws or vain traditions, this Lutheran-trained theologian defined every Yearly Meeting as "a solemn act of renewing our covenant, into which each one of us have entered. . . ."

Those who know me know that I have no objections to adding the word peace. Covenant Peace Church is my first choice. It may not be my last. It does have many of the same connotations that the word Brethren had for me.

I can forfeit the one I have been advocating tongue-in-cheek, namely, choosing the name of the spouse of our founder, Alexander Mack. Why not Anna's Baptists?

Old Testament scholars maintain that names are important. May our conversations about our corporate name increase our understanding and commitment to who we are at our faithful best.

Dale W. Brown, professor emeritus, Bethany Theological Seminary, is a member of Elizabethtown (Pa.) Church of the Brethren.

Janet F. Brounce

NOW IS A BETTER TIME

Bless you for your editorial in the July MESSENGER. Your support will help so much in informing church members about this history of our current name. Once people start to think about this, that will be a real help to them in forming their opinions.

I am the one who came to the "open mike" at Annual Conference this year to ask that the report of Donna Ritchey Martin to Standing Committee be taken up and used for study of the concerns it addressed. It was of great importance to me to do that, because I am also the one who in 1993 moved that Standing Committee accept the report, thank the committee for its work, and dismiss the committee. That year at Annual Conference was such an emotionally charged year, with some very divisive issues.

But now it's time for the discussion to begin again in earnest, and for the name change to happen.

Janet F. Brounce writes from Uniontown, Pa.

Earl H. Traughber

GO AHEAD AND EXPLAIN

I must admit that Jay Gibble's proposed name change for the church sounds attractive to me: "Covenant Peace Church." I like it. However, my experience with the United Church of Christ where I served as pastor for 19 years causes me to pause a bit before signing on to a name change.

When I was called to be pastor I thought it was time to officially change the name of the local congregation to make it correct. After all, it had been about seven years since the name had been chosen and approved by the Conference. So they listened to me and they did change their name. They changed from New Plymouth Congregational Church to New Plymouth Congregational Church, United Church of Christ. That is a bit long, so it popularly goes by Plymouth Congregational U.C.C.

The two congregations in Boise, Idaho, followed the same kind of logic. They are now Boise First Congregational U.C.C. and Wright Community Congregational U.C.C. As long as we are thinking about names, why not include the OEPA, the ABC, the BBT, and the General Board, which is no longer a General Board? These all mean something to those of us inside the church, but speak not many words to those outside. We have to explain each one. Perhaps we need to keep what is and seize the opportunity to explain what it all means.

Earl H. Traughber, of Fruitland, Idaho, is district executive of the Idaho District.

Ethel Sherfy Harris

CELEBRATE SERVICE IN OUR NAME

Personally, I have felt no urge to drop our denominational name, Church of the Brethren. My family roots go back to near the church beginnings, so I find "Brethren" a warm generic blanket for my "fellow" and sister members.

Of more concern to me is the shadow of exclusivity felt by those members who have come into the family fold from the cosmic cold and feel they are never quite as fully family as "birth Brethren" or even sisters. Since fewer of us are from the old or Brethren stock, the days of brethrenism are not quite in the modern mode of church culture, it seems.

A word both to identify us and to describe the theological aspirations of our forebears and our present manner of operation on the world scene is "servant."

The name Servant Church is both an identifying theological statement and a worthy pattern or model for followers of Jesus the servant Lord to hold before them. No one would be excluded except by one's own degree of dedication to the model. It needs no adjective, hyphenated auxiliary, or prepositional phrase to embellish or restrict it. It is a simple statement of purpose.

Our denomination's outstanding ordinance is the feetwashing act demonstrating willingness for humble service. Through the nearly three centuries of its history, service to church and community members caught in devastating problems by fire, illness, and death down to our present disaster relief programs worldwide have been marks of both brotherhood and servanthood.

Missionaries have served hospitals and schools in poverty-stricken areas. We are known for Civilian Public Service, Alternative Service, Brethren Service Relief, Brethren Volunteer Service, leadership in forming Church World Service, disaster relief, emergency child care, civil rights mediation, Heifer Project, peace witness, and rescuing women from prostitution by Global Women's Project.

All of these have sought to "wash the feet of the world" as servants. Making the denomination's name Servant Church could well lift up the ideal of lowly personal service while we follow our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ethel Sherfy Harris, formerly of Jennings, La., where she was a member of Roanoke (La.) Church of the Brethren, now lives in Woodstock, Ill. She first made this suggestion in 1993 and renews it now.

James M. Cross

BRETHREN IS NOT POLITICAL

Today we have several denominations representing the original Schwarzenau Brethren movement. One thing they have in common is that they all proudly retain the term "Brethren" in their names.

I was born into the Brethren church, as were my mother and father. I am very proud of the Church of the Brethren and I consider it "home." As we live a good distance from Buck Creek Church of the Brethren (Mooreland, Ind.),we have tried other churches, but they just don't seem to do things "right."

We, as Brethren, have worked hard to gain the respect of those around us. In a lifetime of almost 60 years, I have never heard the first person chortle about our lovely ladies being called Brethren! It would take an inane sense of humor to do so, or to imagine someone doing so.

As a reminder to our children and grandchildren of the need to go to church, I have the first verse of Psalm 133 posted on our refrigerator. It says, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

Brethren is not sexual; Brethren is not racial; Brethren is not geographical. Brethren is used many times in the Bible simply to refer to the children of God. But most important, Brethren is not political. To consider changing our beloved, historical, respected name just because it isn't politically correct surely requires much consideration. Should we rip our church out by the foundation just because a few members want to impress someone with their superior grammar?

James M. Cross lives in Farmland, Ind.

Brethrening

Pastor makes deacon see red

As pastor and dairy farmer, I frequently switch hats during any given day. I learned a long time ago, though, that white handkerchiefs don't stay white, so I always carry a red bandanna—in pulpit or pasture.

A number of years ago a brother in our congregation requested anointing, as he was facing serious surgery. One of our deacons went along with me to assist. After the brief but meaningful service, we sat in the brother's living room quietly reflecting on the anointing and the upcoming surgery. Our reverie was broken when the deacon pulled out his handkerchief to blow his nose and announced, "I have a red hanky, just like the preacher!"

Both of these brothers have since gone on to be with the Lord. I still carry a red handkerchief.—CHRISTIAN ELLIOTT

Christian Elliott is pastor of Knobsville Church of the Brethren, McConnellsburg, Pa.

MESSENGER would like to publish other short, colorful, humorous or poignant stories of real-life incidents involving Brethren. Please send your submission to MESSENGER, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120-1694 or e-mail to the editor at ffarrar_gb@brethren.org

Open doors worldwide

The words "Brethren arrogance" should not be together in one phrase! But how much arrogance have we shown when people from other cultures have wanted to become a part of our Brethren fellowship? Historically, when a Brethren group was developed in India and in Nigeria we—our Brethren administration—has told them they should become the Church of North India, and of the Church of Christ in the Sudan. The Nigerian church on their own initiative said "No, we want to be an integral part of the Church of the Brethren," and thus they changed the name of their group. The Indian Brethren have not been happy with their status to this day, and may now be taking steps to return to the Brethren fold.

Too, the attempt initiated by Annual Conference to establish the Church of the Brethren in Korea has come to a disastrous halt. In the Caribbean when people have heard the "Brethren" Gospel and want to follow Christ with us, they are told they can become "partners" rather than fully part of the Brethren community. Why? Must one descend from Germanic ancestry to be in full fellowship? Of course not. But why do we not accept one and all into full fellowship with open arms as Christ did? Furthermore, he commanded us to do the same.

Why can we not think big and assist in the development of an overarching global organization for our denomination? Should not representatives of Brethren fellowships from all parts of the world work together to develop such a body? If we think our Church of the Brethren teachings most completely follow the teachings of Jesus, should we not put every effort into opening the door to a true global fellowship of Brethren?

Roy E. Pfaltzgraff, Sr.
Lancaster, Pa.

Brethren Volunteer Service Seeks Older Adult Volunteers

Joanne Nesler, Olive Peters and Sally Caracheo at the Older Adult Orientation.

Next Older Orientation Unit
April 4-14, 2000/New Windsor, Maryland

Application Deadline: February 22, 2000

Contact the BVS office for more information or an application packet.

800-323-8039

1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120
fax: 847-742-0278 e-mail: bvs_gb@brethren.org

Do you have 10 days in April to check out volunteering? BVS is seeking persons for the older adult unit who are considering a term of service. Potential volunteers need not commit to taking an assignment—come and explore the possibilities.

** work with those on the edge of society*
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** challenge yourself*
** use life skills*
** revitalize your spiritual life*
** share God's love*
** go on an adventure*
** maintain the integrity of creation*

BVS

DO THE WORK OF JESUS.

World needs peace witness

Your editorial in the August MESSENGER hit the nail on the head. But I would go further. If we forfeit our peace heritage — if we condone or, worse yet, embrace the way of violence as a means of achieving justice and freedom — then we may as well cut our overhead and merge with another denomination. The world is in dire need of witnesses to the nonviolent ways of Jesus; it is not in need of another group of Christians who are willing to kill for Rome.

George Cornelius
West Chester, Pa.

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BVS

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For more information and application, contact:

Elsie Holderread at
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Classified Ads

BOOKS

$7 Million Prayer Answered. Amazingly Unibank & othe gave up $7 million recently for a House of Worship i Glen Cove, N.Y. as a result of Miracle of Prayers. D Harsimran Singh discusses this power in his book Th Divine Truth along with spiritual answers in 59 chapters, on topics such as Life & Death, Marriage & Divorc Heaven & Hell etc. Donation for the book $10 or mor tax deductible, Divine Power, 24 School St. Glen Cove NY 11542 toll free 1-888-DIVINE-POWER. Join A Fre Prayer Group.

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Deer Lodge: a north woods retreat secluded home sleeps 4; year-round recreation area; fall color; Ottaw National Forest ski trails out the back door; down-hil ski at nearby Powder Horn Mountain; North Countr Trail passes in front; private tennis court; Finnish Lo Cabin bunkhouse sleeps 5; walk to Lake Superior' pristine Black River Harbor, beaches, fishing, gorgeou waterfalls. Located 20 miles north of Ironwood, MI, far western Upper Peninsula. Available September – June starts $75. Reservations: Monica at 906-932-1898. Further info: Ikenberry 906-932-4299 or 316-241-3258 o gikenber@yahoo.com

INVITATIONS

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On Earth Peace Assembly seeks a volunteer program assistant / bookstore co-manager. Applicants should have background in Anabaptist / Church of the Brethren peace theology and conflict resolution. Expertise in organizing and leading program / educational events, retail management experience, and meticulous attention to detail. Responsibilities include co-management of a bookstore / resource center, creation of new program, and frequent travel. OEPA provides room, board, health insurance, and modest stipend. Send inquiries and resumes to OEPA, PO Box 188, New Windsor, MD 21776, 410-635-8704.

TRAVEL

Grand Tour of Europe including Oberammergau Passion Play, Schwarzenau, and the Alps. Reservations available for two and three week tours. One tour is filled, but openings still available for tours departing on June 26, July 17, and July 31, 2000. Please write to J. Kenneth Kreider, 1300 Sheaffer Rd, Elizabethtown, PA 17022.

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Turning Points

New members

Agape, Ft. Wayne, Ind.: Autumn Thomas, Kacie Gauby, Jill Elliott, Julie Elliot, Joe Clapp, Dean Haupert, Tod Rhoades, Joan Brenneman, Jackie Dayton, Steve and Tania Fox
Ashland City, Ashland, Ohio: Scott Cawood, Adam Houston, Brennen Kyser, Skylar Rising
Beaver Creek, Hagerstown, Md.: Jessica Minnick, Fred Detrow, Adam Grosnickle
Enders, Neb.: Amel and Eunie Peterson, Arlan and Lynetta Wine
English River, South English, Iowa: Joe Gregerson, Omer K. Wallerich, Lois Williams, Richard Williams
Ephrata, Pa.: Lauren Denlinger, Lindsey Denlinger, Mandy Frey, Amy Marshall, Kelly Martin, Kevin Oswald, Rachel Rissler
Hatfield, Pa.: Danielle Diaz, Matthew Diaz, Sarah Jones, Kelii Brindle, Eileen Brown, Frank Brown
Huntsdale, Carlisle, Pa.: June Alspaugh, Barbara Smith, Jerry Smith, Robert Weber, John Thumma, Barbara Miller, Stephanie Thumma, Katie Sheaffer, Cassandra Duppstadt, Jessica Sheaffer, Ann Brough, Robert Brough, Albert Shuller, Jr., Saranne Shuller, Jannette Utech, Eugene Utech, Barbara Weber, Paul Weber
Leamersville, Duncansville, Pa.: James Stryker
Living Faith, Delphi, Ind.: Jean Hughes, Jerry Jones, Kenneth Scowden
Luray, Va.: LulaBelle C. Sigler
Marsh Creek, Gettysburg, Pa.: Katelin Nogle, Susan McCarrey, Kevin McCarrey, R. Catherine Moles
New **Carlisle**, Ohio: Mary Huffman
New Covenant, Gotha, Fla.: Curt Alvater, Dianne Landis Alvater, Tom Nicholson
New Enterprise, Pa.: Earla M. Reffner
New Paris, Ind.: Randy Haupert, Renee Haupert, Richard Haberstick, Donna Haberstick, Dan Godfrey, Billy Bontrager
Peoria, Ill.: Andrew Stein, Susan Hoehn, Gwynn Guiliano, Cara Baker, Marc Anderson, Russel Boulton
Shiloh, Kasson, W.Va.: Laura Nicola, Betty Carr, Lorrie Johns
Welty, Smithsburg, Md.: Rosanna Eckstine, Frances Smith, Danielle Kelley
York First, York, Pa.: Glenn and Anna Miller
Zion Hill, Columbiana, Ohio: Corey and Michelle Bowker, Fred and Pat McLaughlin

Wedding anniversaries

Cameron, Lawrence and Ivella, Johnstown, Pa., 72
Detwiler, Chet and Gladys, Goshen, Ind., 60
Eicher, William and Elsie, Harrisonburg, Va., 50
Erbaugh, Lowell and Katherine, Dayton, Ohio, 50
Fike, Norman and Annice, Easton, Md., 60
Goppert, Dale and Maryann, New Paris, Ind., 60
Jones, Bob and Doris, Daleville, Va., 50
Kauffman, J. Clair and Dorothy, Goshen, Ind., 60
Klingaman, Richard and Jean, Waterloo, Iowa, 50
Lam, Robert and Erma, Springville, Iowa, 50
McCreary, Harry and Charlotta, East Freedom, Pa., 50
McDowell, Melvin and Norma, Johnstown, Pa., 60
Platt, James and Phyllis, Waterloo, Iowa, 50
Raymer, William and Ruby, Jacksonville, Fla., 50
Smith, Leroy and Naomi, Hagerstown, Md., 70
White, Lewis and Mildred, Johnstown, Pa., 50
Wiseman, Eugene and Reba,Harrisonburg, Va., 50
Yoder, Glee and Gordon, Lancaster, Pa., 60
Zinn, Phil and Margaret, Tampa, Fla., 60

Deaths

Aukerman, Dale, 69, Union Bridge, Md., Sept. 4
Baugher, William H., 71, Littlestown, Pa., Sept. 3
Baughman, Daisy V., 89, Gettysburg, Pa., Aug. 7
Bopp, Laura, 90, Johnstown, Pa.
Bovey, Helen, 85, Dixon, Ill., Aug. 13
Boyer, Gladys M., 87, New Oxford, Pa., Aug. 22
Bumbaugh, Armatha, 78, Waynesboro, Pa., Dec. 21
Carpenter, Sidney Richard, 86, Warrensburg, Mo., Aug. 19
Chronister, Elwood E., 75, Windsor, Pa., Sept. 1
Clingenpeel, Harry, 76, Boones Mill, Va., April 27
Coffman, Isabella, 79, Moatsville, W.Va., May 22
Collins, Clyde, 73, Delphi, Ind., June 10
Dick, Mary, 71, East Freedom, Pa., Jan. 1
Dove, Evalyn K., 90, Manassas, Va., May 23
Etter, Edna, 95, Pandora, Ohio, Aug. 7
Flora, Andrew, 45, Boones Mill, Va., March 2
Flory, Glen, 92, McPherson, Kan., Sept. 4
Flory, Paul, 87, Ephrata, Pa., July 13
Funderburg, Wilmer C., 79, Greenville, Ohio, Aug. 28
Geer, Patricia, 48, Modesto, Calif., Sept. 2
Good, Geneva, Hagerstown, Md., Nov. 15
Gore, Frank, 58, Johnstown, Pa., Aug. 28
Guthrie, Wayne, 81, New Oxford, Pa., July 13
Hall, Mary, Windber, Pa., May 7
Harrison, William C., 38, Gettysburg, Pa., July 22
Hildebrand, Leroy, 72, Wyomissing, Pa., July 1
Hoffman, Graham, 79, Johnstown, Pa., Aug. 11
Holland, Bessie, 87, Johnstown, Pa., Aug. 27
Huffman, Charlotte O., Centerville, Ohio, April 24
Keiper, Blaine, 85, Johnstown, Pa., April 16
Kimes, Walter, 77, Homeworth, Ohio, July 31
Kindy, Florence, 101, Goshen, Ind., Aug. 21
Kintigh, Helen I., 73, Osage City, Kan., March 2
Kline, Elva, 97, Lancaster, Pa., Aug. 25
Loar, Charles, 98, Grafton, W.Va., July 7
Loucks, Helen I., 79, Goshen, Ind., Aug. 29
Lunko, Anthony, 81, Johnstown, Pa., June 5
MacEwan, Grace, 98, Johnstown, Pa., April 14
McGowan, Stanley, 87, Greenville, Ohio, Aug. 16
McIntyre, Everett, 75, East Freedom, Pa., Aug. 13
McLeary, Laottis, 90, Johnstown, Pa., March 29
Markey, Queene, 92, Windber, Pa., May 5
Miller, Audra Olive, 92, Delphi, Ind.
Miller, Edna, 100, Myerstown, Pa., Aug. 27
Miller, Lewis, 70, Moatsville, W.Va., Nov. 13
Miller, Marion W., 97, Bridgewater, Va., July 27
Miller, Martha L., 81, Goshen, Ind., July 30
Moser, Helen, Hagerstown, Md., Dec. 14
Moser, Henry, 81, Hagerstown, Md., May 24
Mummert, Mary B., 98, Quincy, Pa., June 5
Neff, Kathleen, 80, Nokesville, Va., March 16
Nisley, LeRoy, 72, Middlebury, Ind., July 23
Pullin, Max L., 60, Waterloo, Iowa, June 30
Ream, Catherine, 85, Johnstown, Pa., July 31
Reich, Martha, 90, Urbana, Ill., Aug. 19
Sanger, Henry, Easton, Md., March
Scowden, Chester, 77, Delphi, Ind., March 17
Seese, Robert M., 81, Delphi, Ind., Aug. 11
Sheap, Dorothy E., 84, Lansing, Mich., March 18
Sheap, Stanley H., 79, Lansing, Mich., May 22
Shemon, Charles C., 73, Gettysburg, Pa., Aug. 2
Showalter, Kathryn, 75, Duncansville, Pa., Nov. 22
Snoden, Anna, 94, Lancaster, Pa., Aug. 19
Spade, Betty, 65, Johnstown, Pa., Aug. 30
Spitzer, Martha W., 84, Harrisonburg, Va., July 27
Unzicker, Robert, 77, New Paris, Ind., Aug. 13
Vincent, Mabel V., 86, Peoria, Ill., Aug. 13
Volland, Mary E. Wolfe, 101, New Oxford, Pa., Aug. 11
Vore, Robert Jo, 63, Lima, Ohio, March 23
Wagner, Vivian, 58, Greenville, Ohio, July 13
Warner, Harry, 83, Ft. Wayne, Ind., July 13
Warner, Mary, 89, Easton, Md., March
Weyandt, Anna, 78, East Freedom, Pa., Sept. 2
Wilson, Nelson L., 93, New Oxford, Pa., Sept. 6
Ziegler, Irene, 75, Wyomissing, Pa., July 22
Zimmerman, Mary Lou, Ft. Wayne, Ind., Feb. 23

Licensings

Bach, Ann Marie, March 13, Nettle Creek, Hagerstown, Ind.
Baker, Fern Elizabeth, June 4, Crab Orchard, W.Va.
Cameron, Stephen, Aug. 7, Pleasant Valley,York, N.D.
Hughes, James Robert, Aug. 29, Moorefield, W.Va.
King, Mary Jane, June 9, Newville, Pa.
Naff, Noel S., June 4, Germantown Brick, Rocky Mount, Va.
Wolff, Michael, March 11, Pine Creek, North Liberty, Ind.
Young, Donald L., July 24, St. Joseph, Mo.
Zuercher, Jared, June 12, Ashland Dickey, Ashland, Ohio

Ordinations

Burtz, Ronald, June 12, Virden, Ill.
Brumbaugh-Cayford, Cheryl, Aug. 22, Northern Colorado, Windsor, Colo.
DeBolt, Robert, June 12, Oak Grove, Metamora, Ill.
Firestone, Reid, March 13, Mount Pleasant, North Canton, Ohio
Frey, William Sr., Aug. 6, Wiley, Colo.
Glover, Clara C., Aug. 24, New Carlisle, Ohio
Griffith, Sonja, Nov. 14, First Central, Kansas City, Kan.
Littman, Elsa, May 25, La Porte, Ind.
McLearn-Montz, Alan, May 25, Columbia City, Ind.
Nealis, Louise, July 17, Danville, Rawlings, Md.
Nealis, Robert, July 17, Danville, Rawlings, Md.
Nye, Paul, May 25, Plymouth, Ind.
Riley, Richard, July 8, Frostburg, Md.
Schaadt-Patterson, J. Michael, June 18, Whitestone, Tonasket, Wash.
Spaid, Darrel Robert, Aug. 29, Brick, Maysville, W.Va.

Pastoral placement

Baker, Paul Maynard, from Crab Orchard, W.Va., to Saunders Grove, Moneta, Va.
Braught, Ryan, from Spring Creek, Hershey, Pa., to Hempfield, Hershey, Pa.
Brockway, Joshua, to West Manchester, North Manchester, Ind.
Brockway, Wayne, from Louisville, N. Canton, Ohio, to New Enterprise, Pa.
Cameron, Steve, from interim to permanent, Pleasant Valley, York, N.D.
Chambers, Scott and Stacie, to Markle, Ind.
Dell, Robert, from interim to permanent, Codorus, Loganville, Pa.
Dowdy, Christy and Dale, from Antelope Park, Lincoln, Neb., to Stone, Huntingdon, Pa.
Glasscock, John, from Brooklyn, Iowa, to Prices Creek, Manchester, Ohio
Hutchison, Martin and Sharon, from Florin, Mount Joy, Pa., to Salisbury, Md.
Ludwick, Ronald E., from Big Swatara, Hanoverdale, Hummelstown, Pa., to Lebanon, Pa.
Martin, Donna Ritchey and Tim Ritchey, from Mt. Morris, Ill., to Grossnickle, Myersville, Md.
Quintrell, Gregory S., from Ligonier, Pa., to Mathias, W.Va.
Rice, Larry, to Osceola, Ind.
Wagner, John, from Holmesville, Neb., to Salem, Lenox, Iowa
Worline, James, from Summerdean, Roanoke, Va., to Red Hill, Roanoke, Va.

Editorial

The strange calling

Although he is a United Methodist, I decided John Robert McFarland must be a true Christian after all when I read that he grew up, as I did, in a Sunday school that started with opening exercises where you put your birthday coins, equaling the number of your years, into a plastic cake while the rest sang to you. On their birthdays the older women just wadded up a dollar bill and stuffed it in, figuring the extra cost was a small price to pay for privacy. It was during opening exercises that I reported earnestly to Mrs. Hilliard that Bruce had his eyes open during the prayer, and she received the information just as earnestly. She took no action that I could tell, but still I felt appreciated. So did McFarland.

He was one of a handful of "loose boys" at the Forsythe country church somewhere in Indiana, a "loose boy" being one who came to church without his parents. When boys are often more trouble than joy, the Forsythe people wanted and loved young John Robert and others who weren't wanted anywhere else. At the softball game after the church picnic he played left field, which was by the cemetery. It was disrespectful to the dead to chase the ball over the gravestones, but he did anyway, and nobody seemed to mind much. "Thus I learned about sin from playing ball beside the cemetery. You are supposed to avoid it, but if you do get into it, don't get worked up about it. Just throw the ball to the preacher and get out of there as quickly as possible."

At 14 he made a bargain with God to save his dying sister. She recovered, and he, upholding his end of the deal, went into the ministry. A half-century or so later, McFarland has written a book, *The Strange Calling* (1999, Smith and Helwys Publishing Co.), about his life as preacher and pastor. A master storyteller, McFarland has been a writer for Garrison Keillor's "A Prairie Home Companion," and he has authored several books. I became acquainted with him as a writer when he was pastor of the Arcola (Ill.) United Methodist Church; now he lives in Mason City, Iowa.

In the Church of the Brethren we make a point of keeping our pastors down on our level, with the "priesthood of all believers" and all that goes with it. They're human, not divine, but we all know they're special anyway. They are our interpreters of the mysteries of God. They are the embodiment of the church. They are a presence in time of need. And they are our friends. McFarland gives us rare insights into their vocation, shows some of the pickles they get themselves into, and helps us understand why, though we sometimes get disgusted with them, we love them so much.

It is their "marryin' and buryin'" role that puts our pastors close to us at times when we—and they—are most vulnerable to God's spirit. Once, when McFarland was a student pastor, he was called to the home of a family whose teenage son Billy had just been killed in a car wreck. Not knowing what to say, he recalled some sentimental tripe from *Reader's Digest* about how God always chooses the best roses for the heavenly garden. He left thinking he had failed miserably, only to learn many years later that Billy's father was comforted for the rest of his life by the image of God picking the best flowers. Another funeral of a youngster went well until high school girls started wailing and collapsing in a pile, and the boy's father started to pull the body from the coffin to take his son home. The young pastor, recognizing this was not "good grief," had to take physical charge. At the funeral of his two teenage nephews he explained that God's will is thwarted when young lives end in violence, that these deaths were *not* the will of God. Later, a friend of the family remarked, "Well, as you said this afternoon, pastor, it was the will of God."

A happier side of ministry shines through in his story of "The Tall-Girl Bride." She was large and younger, while her fiance was small and older. They both drove taxis. "He needed someone to take care of his children. She had always wanted a family. There was no talk of love. Instead they spoke of how they would arrange their driving schedules." They'd come to McFarland because he was known as the minister who would marry couples other clergy wouldn't, the "Protestant patron of lost causes." The wedding was hilarious, complete with 300-pound Uncle Rex burning a hole in her veil with his cigar. Afterwards the author watched her in a circle of children by the hand-painted car in the yard, executing a flowing turn so they could watch the train swirl. "She was the prettiest tall-girl bride ever, and I'm the man you come to when there's no place else to go."

When as a 10-year-old he would chase fly balls into the graveyard back at the Forsythe country church, people weren't sure whether he was brave or stupid, but they loved him anyway. "It has marked my career, that fuzzy line between bravery and stupidity," he writes. "I've always felt that I was playing in the margin, a loose boy, at the edge of the graveyard, not quite sure where the game of the living ended and that of the dead began, just happy to be where I was wanted, glad to be in the game."—Fletcher Farrar

Readers may order The Strange Calling *from Brethren Press at 800-441-3712. Price: $22. Ask for Item #0065.*

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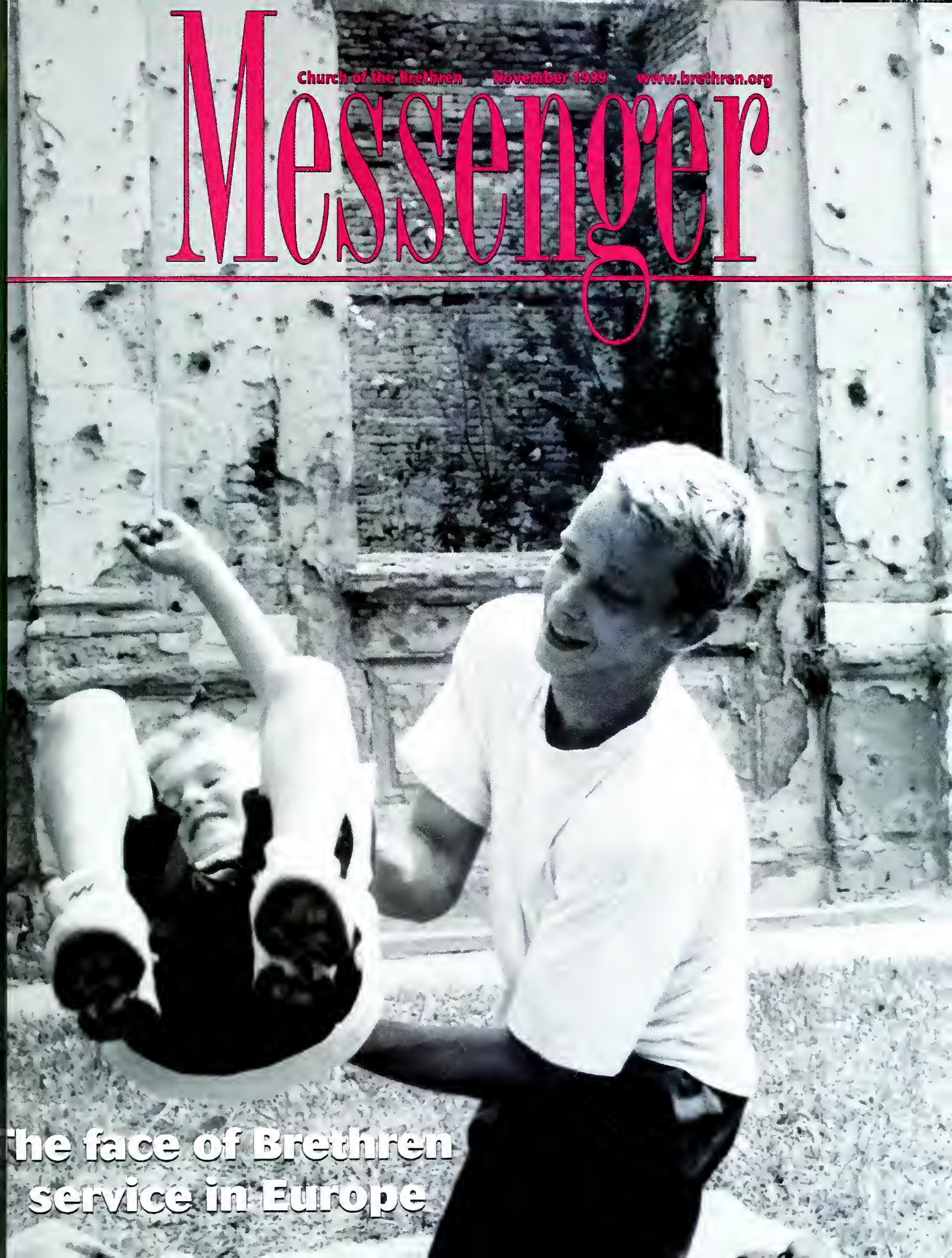

he face of Brethren service in Europe

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On the cover: Frank Klein, a Brethren Volunteer Service worker serving in Bosnia, was photographed during a summer camp in Vukovar, Croatia, which was severely damaged during the Croatian-Serb war of 1991–92. Klein writes: "We went to the main square in Vukovar for a day. In the morning we cleaned the park of blown-p stuff from the building, cut the grass, and set up differnt workshop areas for the local kids. I had workshops ocusing on how to fall, flip, and roll without injury." More f Klein's story begins on page 23. The picture is by Uli oskot, a photographer from Austria. She is a full-time volnteer at the Mladi Most project in Mostar, Bosnia.

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Features

10 Heritage of service in Europe
From relief work following World War II, to working for peace in the Balkans today, the Church of the Brethren has been serving in Europe for 50 years. Leading off a cluster of articles on the work in Europe, Sara Speicher explains how service has come full circle.

15 Peace project profiles
Their work for peace or environmental groups may not be glamorous, but BVSers in Europe are making a difference. Five volunteers explain how.

19 Northern Ireland witness
Since 1972 BVS has sent nearly 100 volunteers to help address the divisions in Northern Ireland. Holly White, a current volunteer, writes sensitively of the complexities and challenges of working for peace.

22 BVS in the Balkans
Volunteers have served in Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Macedonia. They have worked in a children's hospital, on reconstruction and refugee projects, and with peace organizations.

26 Picking your Christmas cards
In the effort to be tolerant of others, we sometimes softpedal our own joy. Ken Gibble urges us to get Christ back into our season's greetings.

28 Get ready for J2K
The year 2000 presents an opportunity for reflection on the birth of Jesus. Resources are offered to help your congregation make the turning of the millennium a time of new hope.

From the Publisher

In the change of seasons, we saw a mouse or two at the General Offices here in Elgin. We had to eat or take home our chocolate and other snacks because the corners were getting nibbled. Some poor souls found only scraps of foil where they had stored up their treasures.

One mouse was even frightened into my briefcase when someone walked into my office while I was out. Fortunately, I'm fond enough of mice that I didn't mind sharing.

I figure the rodents were simply trying to come in out of the cold. Who wouldn't want to live in our cozy office building when an autumn wind sweeps in across the back forty? The furry visitors reminded me that even Indian summer had passed.

Some people relish the crisp days of fall—days that mean apple-picking, golden leaves, football weather. But not me. While I enjoy a hayride as much as the next person, I can never thoroughly enjoy fall—because it comes just before winter. The nip in the air is the precursor to an arctic January. Dead leaves will soon be covered by snow. The world will go monochromatic. For someone who can remember wearing shorts once on Christmas Day in California, northern Illinois winters seem to last at least six months.

But a concept I've come to appreciate is that of fallow time. While the earth is frozen, it is renewing itself. In the fallow season it is engaged in creative rest. We may think nothing is happening, but it is.

I wonder whether that happens to us as well.

When our lives seem bleak and cold and nothing is growing, might the snow be that which ultimately waters our deepest roots? In the wilderness of our souls, can we cultivate the presence of God?

This Thanksgiving, when I thank God for the bounty of the land, perhaps I can also find it within myself to be thankful for the winter that is to come. Thankful for the rhythms and seasons of life, thankful for beauty even when it is severe, thankful for a time in which to build the reserve for the energetic burst that is to come.

Wendy McFadden

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for the Glory of God
and my neighbor's good
1899 - 1999

lockwise: One of the earliest pictures of Elgin Brethren, taken at a church social in 1907. The old Brethren Publishing ouse where the Elgin Brethren gathered on Oct. 2, 1899, for their first official worship service, followed by a meeting to rganize their congregation. The centennial convocation choir made up of Highland Avenue choir members, singers from ister Elgin churches, and the Community Renewal Chorus of Chicago, directed here by Highland Avenue choir director Vil Nolen. The centennial logo designed by David Van Delinder carries the words that are carved on the stone lintel over he door of the church. The loaves and fishes symbolize openness, hospitality, and service to the community.

ommunity Festival marks Highland Avenue centennial

Highland Avenue Church of the Brethren in Elgin, Ill., celebrated its 100th anniversary Oct. 2 with a free community festival and convocation at the local community college.

The Elgin Children's Chorus headlined the community festival. Other entertainment featured a number of Brethren erformers, including folk quartet Kindling, ventriloquist Steve Engle, folksinger Patti Ecker, the Gordon James Jazz uartet, and the Flory handbell duo. About 20 booths and exhibits presented the congregation's history, its connections ith community agencies, and denominational programs.

The evening convocation celebrated Highland Avenue's witness in the Elgin community, where it has provided leaderhip over the years in community service, racial and ethnic concerns, social justice issues, and ecumenical ministries. he speaker was Calvin Morris, head of the Community Renewal Society, in Chicago. The service also featured the ommunity Renewal Chorus and a large ecumenical choir from Elgin-area churches.

Shenandoah adults invest in youth

Older Adult Volunteers of Shenandoah District held their second adult work-camp at Camp Brethren Woods Sept. 20–23, 1999.

Twenty-two persons fellowshipped, shared, dined, and worked together performing tasks around the camp. The work projects included organizing 35 years of camp records, making draperies, computer work, repairs, painting, and light construction, totaling around 370 hours of service.

The enthusiastic group approved having a repeat experience next September. The work is organized by an Older Adult Committee under the guidance of the witness commission. —Esther Bittinger

A sign of good times: *Ronda Rodgers, left, and the anniversary sign she made. Also pictured are David Fennimore, board chair, his wife Jayma, baby Cole, and daughters Nicole, center, and Megan.*

Four Mile church turns 190

Four Mile Church of the Brethren, Liberty, Ind., the first Brethren church in Indiana, is observing its 190-year anniversary this year. A celebration, including a special afternoon service, is planned for Nov. 14.

To commemorate the anniversary, Ronda Rodgers made a sign displayed in front of the church. Each of six panels on the sign depicts events important in the history of the congregation.—Mary Rodgers

Remembered

Anne Kathryn Kiracofe, who served 35 years as a missionary in India, died Sept. 13 in Bridgewater, Va., at the age of 92. Much of her life was devoted to adult education and literacy programs in the village communities of Gujarat state. She moved to the Bridgewater Retirement Community after retiring in 1973. When she was 81 she published the book *A Dream—A Reality: Memoirs of 35 Years in India.*

Congressman George E. Brown, Jr., Democrat of California, died July 16 at age 79. Brethren remember Brown for his service in Brethren Civilian Public Service camp from 1942 to 1944. During that time he spoke out against the confinement of Japanese Americans. He attended CPS reunions in recent years. A Quaker, Brown was known in Congress as a supporter of peace and the environment.

Washington church has a child champ

When she sits with the pastor for the children's message on Sundays, eight-year-old Monica Mason doesn't look like a national championship runner. And if parents Alvin and Karen, members of the Washington City Church of the Brethren, Washington, D.C., had no encouraged her earlier in this year's running season she would not have become the champion she is. They did, and at the AAU National Youth Games held in Cleveland during the summer, Monica placed first for her age group in the 400-meter run and first in the 800-meter run, with a new national record time of 2 minutes 46 seconds. —Ron Martin-Adkins

KING
&
QUEEN
HAROLD &
LOUISE
SMITH

Harold and Louise Smith

Years of service rewarded royally

In August the town of Maxwell, Iowa, named Harold and Louise Smith king and queen of the Old Settler's celebration, in recognition of their service to the Maxwell community. Harold Smith served as pastor of the Maxwell Church of the Brethren for 42 years, from the time he eft Bethany Seminary in 1955 until his retirement in 1997.

Bomberger celebrates 60 years of ministry

On Aug. 29 the Annville, Pa., congregation was joined by about 70 family members and colleagues to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the icensing for Harold Z. Bomberger, of Palmyra, Pa. Speakers reviewed the highights of Harold's career as a pastor, regional and district executive, Annual Conference moderator, seven nterim pastorates since retirement in 1983, and continuing ministry in the Annville congregation.

The long, full life of a pastor's devoted wife

When Mary S. Forney turned 100 on Aug. 7, it was an occasion to remember a full life of Christian service. Her daughter, Allegra Sanner, of Downingtown, Pa., writes: "As a church of the Brethren minister's wife, she directed choirs, led congregational singing, taught Sunday school, helped in the kitchen for church suppers, helped the ladies aid society make quilts, typed all the church bulletins, acted as my father's secretary, and most of all she kept our household of five active kids quiet and calm on Sunday mornings so Dad wasn't disturbed!"

Mary S. Forney

Her husband, Roy Forney, died in 1973. When they were married, he was a lay preacher at East Petersburg Church of the Brethren, a "plain" congregation where Mary wore a black bonnet. But when he moved to the more progressive church in Somerset County, Pa., she stopped on the way and bought her first hat. Her daughters were astonished, but their mother told them, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do!"

Mary Forney is a resident of Brethren Village, Lancaster, Pa.

The highest bidder, *Jonathan Bowman, cuts his father's hair.*

Hair today, gone tomorrow

Pastor Mark Bowman of the Eversole Church of the Brethren, New Lebanon, Ohio, made headlines in the local paper when he announced a plan to replace $1,730 in the church's capital improvement fund. This amount had been borrowed to improve the padding in the church pews. His challenge: If the amount were raised by the time of the church picnic, there would be an auction and the highest bidder could cut his hair.

The goal was met and the lively bidding began. The group with the highest bid was led by the pastor's son, Jonathan. Then the fun started. Several of the youth had the pleasure of using the clippers, under adult supervision.

The local newspaper then did a follow-up story, headlined, "Pastor Bowman lost his locks for a good cause."—Louise McNelly

"In Touch" features news of congregations, districts, and individuals. Send story ideas and photos to "In Touch," Messenger, *1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120.*

News

Hurricane Floyd launches disaster team into action

Hurricane Floyd left a trail of misery along the Atlantic coastline from South Carolina to New York, and the Emergency Response/Service Ministries unit of the Church of the Brethren General Board responded to the aftermath in several ways.

Harold Hubbell, disaster project director from Southeastern District, was sent to the scene in Tarboro, N.C., and received requests from the American Red Cross for disaster child care services in several of its service centers. In response to that request, the ER/SM office placed disaster project manager Jean Myers in Tarboro on Sept. 22, then activated two teams of disaster child car volunteers who had been on alert.

Brethren Volunteer Service Orientation Unit #234 *was held in New Windsor, Md., July18–Aug.7. Participants were, from left right, top row: Amy Yingling, Matt Messick, Nicole Nägele, Georg Krause-Vilmar, Jim Buckles, Erin Sullivan, Lisa Bolton, Matt Peschke, Daniel Greenawalt. Middle row: Matt Stauffer (staff), Liz Abraham, Hendrik Voss, Shoko Murakami, Stefan Wellgraf, Marion Shelly, Sue Grubb (staff). Bottom row: Leslie Smith, Kara Morris, Katie Hedges, Sharon Stump, Naomi Levin, Annika Giffei, Alan Edwards.*

Child care centers were set up in Tarboro and Greenville, and 99 children were cared for in the first five days. Requests for disaster child car in other areas are being evaluated. ER/SM was also planning other cleanup efforts once flood waters receded and volunteers were allowed to help with cleanup and debris removal. Some areas had to wait until well into October before cleanup could start as rivers were slow to crest.

In September the denomination made two allocations from the Emergency Disaster Fund in response to needs presented by Stanley Noffsinger, manager of ER/SN. The first allocation of $10,000 went to support the efforts of Family Farm Drought Response, an ecumenical effort to deliver hay to drought-stricken farmers in the eastern US. A second allocation of $10,000 is going to support ER/SM disaster relief work in response to Hurricane Floyd and any other hurricanes that strike the East Coast this year.

The Global Food Crisis Fund also made a grant in mid-September, sending $5,000 to the Honduran community of El Estribo, where Brethren teams in August worked with residents to reconstruct homes damaged in last fall's Hurricane

Mitch. The grant will provide pigs and chickens for members of women's circles in the southern Honduras village.

"This grant will enable the women, and their families, to raise animals that will create food and profit," said Brethren Witness director David Radcliff, oversees the Global Food Crisis Fund. "Just as important, the livestock will bring meaningful and productive work, and the sense of self-affirmation that comes from this."

Following assessment of this project, consideration will be given to providing additional grants to other communities in this part of Honduras. Contributions to the Global Food Crisis Fund can be sent to the Church of the Brethren General Board at 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120.

Global Food Crisis Fund 2000 projects include El Estribo; Grand Junction, Colo.'s Hand-in-Hand Ministries; southern Sudan; and Ixtahuacan, Guatemala.

On Earth Peace decides to stay put while envisioning

The On Earth Peace Assembly board of directors met Oct. 1-2 at the Brethren Service Center in New Windsor, Md. Among its items of business, the board:

- placed the issue of organizational location on hold until a program envisioning process for OEPA has been completed. Similar recommendations to this effect were received from the staff, executive committee, and the site committee.
- approved a request for sabbatical for executive director Tom Hurst. He will be finalizing his plans for 2000, which call for him to be on sabbatical during parts of the spring and the fall;
- tabled the discussion regarding issuing public witness statements until the envisioning process is completed;
- affirmed a formal consensus decision making process that will be implemented after appropriate training;
- discussed a new nominating procedure, reviewed the board of directors position description, and approved the 1999/2000 budget.

Phyllis Senesi of Kalamazoo, Mich., led OEPA's board and staff through a one-day envisioning process. Attendees listed internal and external factors as they relate to OEPA, followed by a brainstorming exercise about possible program ideas. At the end of the exercise, an envisioning group of board and staff was named to review the collected information and to present a document to the April board meeting that delineates possible areas of focus.

New office space allows Mutual Aid to keep growing

The Mutual Aid Association of the Church of the Brethren, in Abilene, Kan., in October celebrated some new room to spread its wings.

After looking at relocation options, the board decided to stay in Abilene and instead work on expansion. The agency, which specializes in property insurance, dedicated an 8,200-square-foot addition on Oct. 7.

The addition/renovation project nearly triples the size of the building and will better accommodate current work as well as future growth. It also includes a multipurpose room that will be available for local church meetings or district and community functions.

Successful disaster relief auction brings in $440,000

The annual Brethren Disaster Relief Auction, Inc., coordinated by the Atlantic Northeast and Southern Pennsylvania districts, took place Sept. 24-25 at the Lebanon (Pa.) Expo Center.

Chairpersons Marlin and Jane Snavely said that an estimated 7,500 people attended the sale, which produced $440,000 in total proceeds. The money will go to help people affected by natural disasters, both locally and worldwide.

Among this year's statistics: about 70 heifers were sold to raise $82,600; a livestock sale produced $11,000; general food sales netted $35,500, baked goods made $12,000; and more than 140 quilts and wall hangings brought in $53,900.

Sixteen area auctioneers volunteered their time to sell the quilts and a host of other items, from Longaberger baskets, to Beanie Babies, to a homemade fishing rod, furniture, and toys.

Bridgewater receives $50,000 for two model classrooms

The Bridgewater College education department recently received a $50,000 grant for 1999-2000 from the Jessie Ball duPont Fund of Jacksonville, Fla.

The money will be used to create two state-of-the-art model classrooms, one of them containing a model educational media center for teacher training.

Bridgewater will name the education department's area the Jessie Ball duPont Center for Teacher Education.

The September grant is the latest of numerous grants to Bridgewater from the fund, named for the late Jessie Dew Ball duPont of Virginia.

Rare books given to Juniata include 15 Sauer Bibles

Juniata College in Huntingdon, Pa., received more than 1,000 rare books from the collection of Mutual Benefit Group founder W. Emmert Swigart in September.

Three members of the Mutual Benefit Group Investment Committee are graduates of Juniata and recommended the gift. Other portions of Swigart's book collection had previously been presented to the college.

The collection includes 15 Sauer Bibles, among the first Bibles printed in North America, with 1743, 1763, and 1776 editions.

"All three editions of the Sauer Bible are rare," said Dr. Donald F. Durnbaugh, Juniata archivist. "It's startling that Mr. Swigart was able to collect so many." The gift will become part of Juniata's Special Collections, most of which are housed in the Treasure Room of the college's Beeghly Library.

Appointments to view the collection may be made by calling the library at 814-641-3450.

Bethany receives Lilly grant for education technology

Bethany Theological Seminary and Earlham School of Religion in Richmond, Ind., have received a $100,000 grant from the Indianapolis-based Lilly Endowment Inc. to augment their joint program of Information Technology for Theological Teaching.

The schools received a $200,000 grant in 1998 to initiate the project, which seeks to make appropriate and effective use of information technology in teaching and learning and to prepare students to make similar use of new technologies in their work and ministry.

Since then, new computer hardware and software have been purchased, training has been provided for both students and faculty, and a full-time information technology coordinator, Steve Spyker, was employed to implement the program.

The new supplemental grant will enable Bethany and ESR to further enhance their technological capabilities and their use for education. Among the new projects, the schools will establish a lab for training faculty and students.

The grant will also support continuation of the teaching consultant program, which provides faculty release time from regular teaching responsibilities to gain expertise in a chosen technology.

Another new project will be offering a technology-focused graduate seminar. Rick Gardner, academic dean at Bethany, says that this course "will prepare church leaders to use 21st-century technology in congregations and other ministry settings." Possible topics include the ethical use of technology, communication dynamics within a congregation, creating sophisticated publications using desktop software, Web pages as a form of ministry, and how technological advances have shaped theological thought. The new grant will be disbursed over a period of five years.

Virlina names Woodard to district leadership post

Emma Jean Woodard has been named interim associate district for Virlina District. She will serve 15 months beginning Jan. 1.

Woodard is a graduate of Bluefield College, Bowie State University and the Training in Ministry (TRIM) program. She has served as administrative secretary for the Westminister (Md.) Church of the Brethren and as interim pastor for Roanoke First, Troutville, and Cloverdale congregations in Virlina District. With her husband, Ed Woodard (pastor of Roanoke Oak Grove), she is the parent of one daughter and one son.

ifth older adult conference cheduled for September

More than 1,100 older adults are expected to make the biennial trek to Lake Junaluska (N.C.) Assembly for he fifth National Older Adult Conerence, set for Sept. 11–15, 2000.

Sponsored by the Older Adult Ministry of the Association of Brethren Caregivers, this week-long onference will be a time of renewal, ellowship, and worship for older dults.

The theme for NOAC 2000 will be Still Bearing Fruit, Still Fresh and Green" based on Psalm 92:14. With his theme, conference planners say, he conference will remind the enomination that older adults are ital and productive members of the hurch and larger community.

Conference speakers and worship elebrations will focus on encouraging older adults to continue to grow, earn, give, and receive. Conference planners include members of the Older Adult Ministry Steering Committee and volunteer conference oordinators Carl and Doreen Myers.

ABC is encouraging districts, Brethren retirement facilities, and ongregations to consider coordinating bus transportation to Lake unaluska, N.C., as a way to provide afe and economical travel options or older adults in their areas. At the nd of the year, pastors and district ffices will receive multiple copies of he NOAC 2000 promotional rochure for distribution to intersted church members.

Nevin Dulabaum

Planning for Annual Conference 2000: *The committee to plan worship for next summer's Kansas City Annual Conference has begun its work. Meeting at the General Offices in Elgin, Ill., in late September were, clockwise from left: Duane Steiner, Conference executive director, Lombard, Ill.; Marla Bieber Abe, Program and Arrangements Committee member, Akron, Ohio; Paul Roth, Program and Arrangements Committee member, Broadway, Va.; Rosalea Cox, choir director, Cushing, Okla.; Emily Mumma, moderator, Duncansville, Pa.; Becky Rhodes, Program and Arrangements Committee member, Roanoke, Va.; and Leslie Lake, music coordinator, Orrville, Ohio.*

eMountain Communications receives design award

Brethren Benefit Trust's eMountain Communications and Chicago-based PiperStudiosInc received an award for excellence in communication and graphic design on Sept. 16 for the design of eMountain's ClearViewNet Internet service Web site.

Now in its 23rd year, the American Graphics Awards are presented by *Graphic Design USA* magazine, honoring the most outstanding entries for graphic design communications. Nearly 10,000 entries were received in 27 categories; fewer than 700 were given awards by the panel of 10 judges who represented publishing, design, and advertising agencies nationwide.

"We are very proud of the ClearViewNet Web site and its graphical communication of a welcome place to begin a different sort of Internet experience," said Michael Addison, ClearViewNet project director. "To me, this award symbolizes what great things can happen when separate organizations work in concert with each other to achieve a common goal."

In addition to the ClearViewNet award, PiperStudiosInc also won an award for seven case studies offered on its home page, including its work with ClearViewNet. ClearViewNet's award-winning site is located at www.clearviewnet.net.

A full circle of service

For 50 years Brethren volunteers in Europe have been working for peace

BY SARA SPEICHER

In Greece, 1959, volunteer Royce Roesch worked to improve the quality of chickens in rural villages

In July 1949, M.R. Zigler, director of Brethren Service Committee relief and rehabilitation work in Europe, wrote the following to BSC staff in Germany:

"As I view the activities of the Church of the Brethren for the year 1949, I am convinced beyond any reasonable doubt that you are on the most significant mission of the Church. There has never been anything like it and there can never be a repetition. . . . I am hoping that quickly you will get a vision that will challenge you and the Church of the Brethren for the next 25 years" *(Pragmatic Prophet, p. 197).*

It is now 50 years that such a vision has challenged individuals and the church alike. The violence and war in the Balkans provide eerie parallels to the beginning of Brethren Service in Europe. "It's gone full circle," says Kristin Flory, coordinator of Brethren Service in

Europe since 1987. “Brethren started serving in war-torn Europe, picking up the pieces after the war. Now the scene has shifted southwards, and the Brethren are again there, working on peace efforts.”

The last 50-plus years have provided many of the stories showing the strength and vision of Brethren service. It also, as M.R. Zigler predicted, continues to provide a lirect challenge to how we can be faithful witnesses for peace and serve basic human needs.

Blankets, clothing, food, and heifers

Brethren officially began serving in Europe at the close of World War II to provide basic material aid o the victims of the war and minister to children and youth. Personnel from he Brethren Service Commission (then called the Brethren Service Committee) served in prisoner of war camps and refugee centers, traveled as “seagoing cowboys,” provided lisaster relief services, and worked in such projects as the youth rehabilitation village at Kaltenstein Castle in Germany. Because of the Christian motivation for the work, closer links were made with the World Council of Churches just being formed, and in 1948 M.R. Zigler was called to Geneva, Switzerland, to lirect BSC work in Europe and be the Brethren representative to the WCC.

Sara Speicher

Kristin Flory, coordinator of Brethren Service in Europe, with her predecessor, Dale Ott.

Brethren Volunteer Service began in 1948, and in the summer of 1949 staff were considering whether BVSers could serve in Europe. There were some initial reservations. The ever-present question of finances was combined with concerns over whether the young volunteers would be able to handle the pressures, tasks, and sensitivities of the post-war situation.

But the reservations were overcome, and the first six volunteers from BVS training unit no. 3 headed to Europe in the fall of 1949. While much of the work of providing material aid continued, already a shift in emphasis could be seen. The need for foreign aid and disaster relief diminished and opportunities opened for longer-range social projects, peace education, and building relationships as a foundation for understanding and reconciliation.

Building bridges between East and West

In reflecting on the history of Brethren service in Europe, Kristin Flory and Dale Ott see the Berlin Wall as a symbol of the needs Brethren were trying to address. Constructed in 1961, the wall served to separate political and economic ideologies, and in the process separated people, cultures, and religious traditions. The Brethren stayed in contact with churches and people on both sides.

“The big thing with Brethren Service in those years was to build bridges, especially among people, to build understanding among people,” states Ott, who was director from 1966 to 1987. “Physical construction was a very important part of our early service, but that was not nearly as important as the bridge-building we did.” Visiting congregations on the two sides of the wall, Brethren listened, built friendships, shared understandings, and sought to overcome misunderstandings.

“The heroes in the West, at this time,” says Ott, “were those who jumped the walls and escaped. But to me, the heroes were my friends, especially in the churches, who could have escaped but didn’t, because they felt they should stay and share their faith where they were. This was a real witness to me. The church was not a building, it was the people.”

When the wall was dramatically demolished in 1989, the Brethren were able to place a volunteer, Doug Hume, in a congregation in East Berlin. “A strong image of Brethren Service for me,” Flory noted, “was watching the first volunteer go to East Germany. An American might have been an unwelcome presence in some parts of East Germany, but in this church congregation he was very welcomed because he showed solidarity after the wall came down by putting himself in their shoes and living alongside them in their apartment buildings.”

Building bridges between East and West was also exemplified in Brethren work in Poland. Relief work in Poland began in 1946, but political tensions grew and eventually the Polish government stopped the work in 1949. Yet connec-

In the 1950s volunteer nursery worker Ethel Myer cares for children whose families were being resettled in Europe.

tions were maintained, and in 1957 a unique exchange was begun. Through the Polish Agricultural Exchange, hundreds of Polish scientists came to the US for practical study and experience. In return, many BVSers went to Poland, mainly as English teachers in the agricultural institutes. At its peak, 10 to 12 volunteers were serving in Poland at one time.

Solidarity, presence, sharing, practical help—this is what the Brethren could offer to a divided continent. And while our small efforts cannot be said to have brought down the Berlin Wall, they have shown to the world that walls cannot divide us.

Crossing lines

It is characteristic of Brethren service in every region to address needs of people on both sides of a conflict and to seek to build personal relationships between the opposing peoples. In Europe, volunteers were helping Greeks and Turks in Cyprus before the Turkish invasion in 1974. Summer workcamps and seminars were held throughout Europe, bringing people from different countries to work together at construction and other projects to address basic needs.

In Northern Ireland, Brethren volunteers work with both Catholics and Protestants. The city of Belfast has its own "Berlin walls"—walls called "Peace Lines" that separate nationalist and unionist communities. So Brethren have made it a point to work with partners in both communities in projects that seek to build understanding and reconciliation.

"One of the things we could do," says Flory, "was to cross barriers where others could not so easily." In places like Northern Ireland, it has also been vital to work with and support local partners in their efforts to find solutions for their own community. Volunteers work with children and youth and people with disabilities. They serve at women's shelters, ecumenical communities, and local peace organizations. In supporting the local projects, they are also supporting the long-term goal of a peaceful resolution of the conflict that has divided Northern Ireland for more than 30 years.

While high-profile politicians have received the most media attention with the recent cease-fires and referendum, it is such local, grassroots work that made the cease-fires possible, and will be necessary in order for a lasting solution to be maintained.

Peacemaking in the midst of war

In 1999, the world is again watching war and the results of war in the former Yugoslavia. For the Brethren, the steady presence and peace witness continue. But here Brethren are also challenged to look at the future of what their service in Europe—and their peace witness in general—might be.

In 1992 Flory received a call from Eric Bachman, a former BVSer involved in trying to help Croatian and Serbian peace groups. He knew that they needed someone to help them with e-mail because they could not communicate directly with each other during the war in Croatia. By e-mail, though, they could use phone lines to third countries and from there be able to send messages to one another. Bachman asked if

In 1959 BVSer Johnny Fillmore works to rebuild a school in Europe.

BVS could help facilitate that, and Flory was quickly able to send a volunteer. From that project, BVS work in the region grew.

"It's amazing," says Flory, "just one phone call. It was even during a World Council of Churches Central Committee meeting, Don Miller [then general secretary] was there, and they had just spent a day discussing what to do in the former Yugoslavia. I came back up to my office and the phone was ringing and it was Eric saying, 'Do you have a volunteer?'"

Again, work in the region means serving communities on both sides of the conflict. Brethren had volunteers in Serbia and at the same time volunteers in Croatia and in the two parts of Bosnia. Today there are volunteers working with Kosovar Albanian refugees, and BVSers have just been sent back to Belgrade, Serbia, to work with peace groups there.

Because Brethren have been in the region through the violence and turmoil of the last seven years, the question of what Brethren can do to prevent violence becomes all the more poignant. The Balkan Peace Team, an international project through which some Brethren volunteers serve in the region, is seen as one possibility. By establishing a permanent presence of international teams and working for nonviolent conflict resolution and civil society development, BPT hopes to build foundations that will prevent explosions such as in Kosovo. Yet such efforts are not big enough yet, and peacemakers struggle over the desire for mass change and the reality of working on small but effective efforts of dialog.

Coming home

Brethren Service in Europe is not just about effecting change in Europe. It is about effecting tremendous change in the individuals who come to serve, and who, in going back home to the US and to the church, have valuable and challenging lessons to share.

"It's a two-sided thing," notes Flory. "We are over here to bring our skills to these organizations, but in our learning process, it is just as important that the volunteers take back what they learn here and share it in the United States.

"Sometimes . . . I think change needs to take place in the US more than in Europe. These people are really equipped to go back, having gained new insights and new skills, like in conflict resolution. They need to do some rabble-rousing in the United States. I think that is half of what we are about."

Dale Ott remembers the 1968 BVS conference in Yugoslavia. "Here we were, BVSers from Europe and the Middle East, meeting in what was then a very communist country, yet speaking our minds very freely, perhaps too freely, on the hottest issue of the day—Vietnam."

As Ott recalls, the conference almost broke up over the issue of America's involvement in the war. "Many BVSers urged everyone to leave their projects and return to America to work on the 'real issue' of Vietnam." In the end, all agreed to remain in Europe and oppose the war as best they could. "But they learned so much in Europe that it pointed out how

1999 European BVSers on retreat.

much there was to do at home."

"Volunteers come to a different place in BVS," agrees Flory. "For one thing, when they go back, it is hard to see all the consumption and materialism in the US lifestyle. That is very disturbing. They have learned to do without, and they've learned it is not a sacrifice."

Back home, how do you share that you have received more than you have given in service? How do you demonstrate the hospitality that you have experienced by serving in poor areas, where people who have so little wish to share with you everything they have? How do you share the vivid realizations of how American political and economic power is wielded throughout the world? For the volunteers returning from Europe, their sense of service, and of witness, continues for a long time.

Meeting needs

Brethren service has straightforward goals, as articulated through BVS: advocating justice, peacemaking, serving basic human needs, and maintaining the integrity of creation. It is this approach that has made Brethren service known to projects throughout Europe. "I don't have to go looking for projects anymore," says Flory. "Volunteers say, 'Look, there's a need here,' or the projects or organizations say, 'Look, there's a volunteer who is doing good work; why don't we get someone like that to help us?'"

Brethren service is also known for its flexibility. Flory continues: "We are open to different kinds of people coming in, as long as they are willing to examine the Christian faith, and we are open to different kinds of projects."

Many of the projects identified with the BVS goals are not faith-based. "It doesn't matter where you witness, or where you listen or try to find dialog," Flory remarks. "One of our secular projects in Bosnia is a good example of that listening—listening to women who were survivors of the war in Bosnia, listening to all three sides. You hear their stories, you become friends with them, and maybe you tell them your own story. You become changed."

Ott notes, "For many of us, our desire to serve has strong theological undergirdings. But in addition, we start with our common humanity and our desire for peace—something most people would agree to in one way or the other. Recognition of our common humanity already carries with it a strong spiritual dimension, allowing genuine sharing and witness to build from there."

It is the Brethren desire to meet needs wherever they are found, in whatever ways are possible, that has made Brethren service so well known and respected in Europe in spite of its small numbers. In a 1970 interview by Howard Royer, Dale Ott noted, "I feel that the Brethren perhaps have as good an answer as any church . . . namely that we are to serve anywhere where there is human need, quite apart from what those people may profess religiously or politically. Whether these are Christians or even non-religious people I think is not the first question. The question is, what are the needs, and can we be of help in answering these needs?"

Serving into the future

The administrative office for Brethren service work in Europe continues to be housed in the Ecumenical Center in Geneva, Switzerland. Other administrative offices that had been scattered throughout Europe and the Middle East were gradually closed down and budgets were reduced. Now a one-person staff oversees the placement and support of approximately 20 volunteers in over 30 possible projects in 13 European countries. A focus on disarmament and peace and community projects continues, and more environmental projects hav been identified and strengthened.

The challenges to the church from the volunteers serving in Europe continue more strongly than ever. How can we be effective agents for peace in situations of war? How can we work at preventing conflict and not just picking up the pieces afterwards? How can we take what we have learned through listening, dialoging, and sharing, back home? How can we be effective stewards of our natural resources and economic wealth? These are questions that we continue to wrestle with as a church.

But service is also about individual change, about friendships built across cultures and languages, the reconciliation of neighbors, the cup of cold water. Volunteers working in the region where the Church of the Brethren was born are finding new visions and challenges for the church, wherever it may be, to take into the next century.

M.R. would be proud.

Sara Speicher is a member of the Church of the Brethren currently working in Geneva, Switzerland, as a communication officer for the World Council of Churches.

Working for peace in an office

BVS work in Europe is often as unglamorous as it is important

BVSers who work in Europe with peace or environmental groups may not be on "the front lines" in their sometimes unglamorous office work, but their work is highly valued and their contributions to peace important. We asked several of them to share their reflections on the work they do.

Kristin Flory

Aaron Richardson

Aaron Richardson
Aktion Sühnezeichen
Friedensdienste
Berlin,Germany

Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste (ASF) or, roughly translated into English, Action Reconciliation Service for Peace, was founded by members of the German Protestant church n 1958. The founders wanted to set a "sign of atonement" for the crimes of the Nazi era, not just with words, but by actions. Since then ASF has been nvolved in 12 countries in Europe, Israel, and the US with a volunteer program for young adults between the ages of 18 and 26.

In 1968 ASF was invited by the peace churches and the United Church of Christ to send volunteers to the US. Don Snider, BVS training director in the 1960s, wrote then to ASF in Berlin:

"Hundreds of conscientious objectors were sent to Germany in the days of 'reconstruction' and they are even volunteering today. It would be promising if it could be a reciprocal venture. The idea of reconciliation is so important in these days and the demonstration of good will and compassion must be heard in these days of hate and destruction."

Since then over 700 ASF volunteers have worked in the US with peace and social justice groups and for reconciliation with the Jewish community. Overall, around 10,000 volunteers have worked through ASF since its inception.

Why would there still be the need for an American to work with ASF today? Germany has long since been rebuilt, and one does not see the poverty and hunger there as in other parts of the world. In spite of this, one must not forget the importance of the terrible times of the Nazi era and the millions of people who suffered under that regime. Many today, not just in Germany, have denied or at least tried to minimize the meaning of the holocaust. For me it is important to be sure that this history will not be forgotten.

ASF is still a German organization, but has members and supporters from around the world. I find it important that the various nations in the ASF administration are represented and to help the ASF office in Berlin maintain an international perspective.

Manchester College graduate Aaron Richardson from LaPorte, Ind., is at least the fourth BVS volunteer to enjoy working at ASF in Berlin. Kristin Flory, current Brethren Service coordinator in Geneva, also served there in the 1980s.

Frank Klein

Matthew St. Clair

Matthew St. Clair
Hnuti DUHA – "Rainbow Movement"
Brno/Czech Republic

Ten years after the fall of communism, the first environmental organizations formed in democratic Central and Eastern Europe are celebrating and reflecting on their 10th anniversaries. Like most other environmental activist groups in the region, young people fill the ranks of Hnuti DUHA/Friends of the Earth-Czech Republic. The oldest staffer is 30 years old and, except for me, all are Czech in nationality.

It would be difficult to sum up the organization's philosophy in only a few words. The best I can do is to say that Hnuti DUHA works in opposition to globalization in the context of the Czech Republic. This stems from a realization that today nearly every local environmental issue is influenced by international forces. Transnational corporations continue their reach into every part of people's lives all around the world, and are the source of many social and environmental ills. In response to this, environmental and human rights groups are learning to work together across borders to tackle the issues they face.

This is the long way to say that Hnuti DUHA does a lot of international work, and sees its international role as crucial to the future of the organization. As English is the international language, all of this international work must be conducted in English. Even with varying degrees of English fluency among its employees and volunteers, none of them is a native speaker, so DUHA asked for a BVSer and brought me in to help with this burgeoning international work. This involves constant editing, some grant-writing, and, most exciting, coordination of international campaigns such as energy conservation, shutdown of nuclear power plants, and forest protection.

As a BVSer, I am helping an organization which works within its borders and with neighboring countries to protect the natural environment, and in general to empower citizens to speak up for their rights and interests against a background of traditionally unresponsive government and politicians — making democracy work for people and the environment.

Matt St.Clair, from Ontario, Calif., near Los Angeles, is the fourth BVSer at Hnuti DUHA ("Rainbow Movement"), currently one of only two environmental organizations in Europe where BVSers are placed. Through Matt's work at DUHA, he has had the opportunity to meet a fascinating variety of people, and to visit intriguing places like castles, forests, and pig farms.

Nancy Zook
Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and Christian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
London, England

As I was flipping though the channels on TV one weekend, I came across a 1960s film about the effects of nuclear testing on the world's climate. In the film Londoners are shown protesting against the tests. Throughout these scenes th "peace" sign is prevalent.

I now know that the "peace" sign is actually the symbol for my project, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. CND and its specialist sections, one of which is the other half of my project, Christian CND have played a major role in British culture since the 1950s. It was associated with massive marches, protests, and peace camps.

In the 1980s CND was at least partially responsible for ridding Britain of cruise missiles capable of firing nuclear warheads. Seeing the impact that CND has had on British public life caused me to stop and think about where we as an organization are today.

CND's membership has significantly diminished since the end of the Cold War. Most people's response when I tell them where I volunteer is, "Oh, you still exist? My mom used to be a member."

Remarks such as these make me wonder if we can still be effective and what chance we have of affecting Britain's nuclear weapons policy. Most of the time I have to accept that the day-to-day changes are very small. At the same time, I feel that it is important to retain my optimism and general faith in the goodness of people. Without this, the movement would not exist and change would never occur.

Day after day my colleagues and I fight the evil of nuclear weapons with everything we have. We make information available to our members and to the public, organize demonstrations, lobby the British parliament, and try to raise overall awareness of nuclear issues. My role ranges from painting banners to helping to write parliamentary briefings, from putting together a newsletter, to maintaining a Website. Having a volunteer position such as this is exciting, challenging, and frustrating all at once.

Nancy Zook, from Tekonsha, Mich., is only the second BVSer in recent years to juggle working for both Christian CND and CND, which are, fortunately, located in the same building in north London. Previous BVSers have served at CND only.

Gregory Dix Frantz

International Peace Bureau
Geneva, Switzerland

The name of my project embodies what the project means to me. I am a Church of the Brethren pacifist who volunteers for peace, at an organization that strives for international peace. The International Peace Bureau currently acts as an umbrella organization, coordinating and representing just under 200 peace organizations from around the world.

The IPB, along with two other offices, organized and held a large peace conference in May called "The Hague Appeal for Peace 1999." The preparations for this took up much of my time during the past year – mailing out hundreds of packets of information, stuffing countless envelopes, or sendng dozens of faxes. It was an exciting yet tiring time. It gave me the opportunity to see how dedicated to peace the people are.

By the time the 9,000-plus participants had filled the conference hall in The Hague, busily attending workshops, meeting in small groups, working together, I could hardly contain my excitement. My role rapidly changed as the entire staff was called upon to do more and more. The conference was a whirlwind. I spent the majority of my time acting as a problem-solver — or in soccer terms, a "sweeper." I found this fullfilling because I knew that the situations that I solved would help make the conference better for the participants.

Aaron Richardson at ASF table in June.

The interactions I have had with others who have devoted their entire lives to working for peace will never be forgotten. My time in BVS has given me the opportunity to explore what peace and service really are. I have found that they are not so easily defined nor easy to attain. Growing up in the Church of the Brethren helped formulate a deep sense of pacifism and service within me. My experience with the IPB has allowed me to live out these ideals.

Gregory Dix Frantz, from Lancaster, Pa., is the sixth BVSer in Geneva. The Hague Appeal for Peace Conference in the Netherlands was convened 100 years after the first peace conference there. Besides Greg's administrative and trouble-shooting tasks at the IPB office, he has also found time to explore the surrounding Swiss countryside.

Ross Musselman II

International Fellowship of Reconciliation
Alkmaar,The Netherlands

People are often surprised to hear that I work in the Netherlands for a peace organization. Peace is supposed to be a foreign issue, and violence only occurs where bombs explode in densely populated civilian areas. Emotional battering, greed, and discrimination remain acceptable.

But then again, violence extends beyond people car-

BVS volunteer Gregory Dix Frantz, third from left, with other organizers of The Hague Appeal for Peace.

rying weapons. Violence transmogrifies, surfacing in offices, boardrooms, and neighborhoods. Thus, violence exists in Alkmaar, the Netherlands.

The International Fellowship of Reconciliation addresses these local issues as well as disarmament and structural violence. Its valuable lesson is dealing with violence at hand. For instance, how can I call to reconciliation children who are throwing rocks at each other on the playground? How do I react when a colleague violently criticizes someone in the office? These everyday questions are as relevant as picketing the Pentagon or monkey-wrenching military equipment.

When I began my term of service, I found it difficult to proclaim nonviolence without being on the front line. How can I tell a Kosovar or a Bosniac that violence is not the answer when I have never been faced with war? And if I am so committed to peace, shouldn't I be tackling the big problems first? Isn't stopping the bombing in Iraq more important than economic oppression?

I struggled with this question when family or friends would call, wondering why I sacrificed two years of my life to this "nonviolent mission."

Soon it dawned on me. I *am* on the front line. The front line is not limited to some exotic land where bombs fall, grenades explode, and shots spray across the hillside. Turn around. The front line is here. Turn around. It is here, too. M.

Ross Musselman II, from Hutchinson, Kan., is the 15th BVSer since 1977 to work at the International Fellowship of Reconciliation. Ross is the managing editor of IFOR's magazine, "RI" (Reconciliation International). He can also be found attending soccer games, singing in a local Mennonite church choir, or going "waadlopen" in the nearby sea.

Navigating the complexities of Northern Ireland

BVSers find answers to big questions by doing small things

BY HOLLY WHITE

Holly White works for the Peace and Reconciliation Group in Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland.

"Where ya for?"

That is the question.

It is the local taxi driver asking me where I am going, what is my destination, as I slip into the back seat.

"Where ya for?"

With one word a world of information about him, about me, and about Northern Ireland can explode inside that taxi. We will have eight minutes together—traveling in our capsule through the city—to pick through those fragments. It is a thin band of time in the spectrum of a two-year BVS assignment, but it is what we have and we choose our words carefully. He will know from my answer that I am American and that, while I live in a Catholic area, I am headed toward a Protestant housing estate. This will spark his interest and he will ask what work I do that makes me want to go "there." He may ask nervously, for while he might have been driving a taxi for 20 years in my town of 100,000, he will have never been asked to drive "there." At many times during those 20 years, that £3 fare would have risked his life.

Northern Ireland, a province of 1.6 million people, has a 400-year history of sectarian conflict between Catholics and Protestants. The period of the last 30 years has been the most visible of that conflict that has raged through centuries as a contest of cultural importance, land rights, political allegiance, and local power.

What started as a civil rights campaign in the late 1960s has turned into what is known euphemistically as "The Troubles," a term that poorly sums up 3,600 deaths, mass migration, distrust between communities, grief, and profound insecurity. The Troubles have attracted international attention for not only its horror but also for its confounding premise: what does it mean that Catholics and Protestants—who live and work side by side in other countries—have seen violence as a way through their differences? What is our response as individuals and as the Church of the Brethren to this regional conflict? Is our response any different since the cease-fires and Good Friday Agreement have brought "peace?"

In the early 1970s, the general secretary of the Irish Council of Churches and a Methodist pastor from Belfast invited the Church of the Brethren to become involved in the escalating conflict in Northern Ireland. It was suggested that Brethren volunteers could extend their commitment to peace and justice through nonviolence in this province that had become violent as it searched for political and social change.

Nearly 100 volunteers since 1972 have worked to address the divisions in Northern Ireland. The assignments have been

Kristin Flory

Northern Ireland BVSers in April

varied: from stuffing envelopes to playing with toddlers, from organizing workshops about identity and culture to planning retreats away from the stresses of the conflict. All of the work is based on the BVS commitment to nonviolence and reconciliation and is powered by the vision of justice and peace.

But what is justice in this country that has known such abuses of power? What is peace in a place still with military watchtowers and army presence? What can I say in a taxi in eight minutes that will affect 30 years?

Life as a BVSer is complex and challenging as we each navigate our way through questions global and personal. This is intentional living: we live with an awareness of our place, our bias, and our potential. We find answers to our big questions by doing small things.

Many of the placements, past and present, have been working with young people in a cross-community context, between Catholics and Protestant youth, to challenge their stereotypes about "the other side." Other work has been with children. The care and kindness extended to one level of the society affects other levels as well.

Quaker Cottage is a cross-community family center located in the hills around Belfast, a quiet place away from the urban and divided communities it serves. Volunteers there are titled child care workers, but they also spend time with the "mums" in meaningful ways.

Current volunteer Leslie Altic explains: "Here at the Cottage, I have learned to listen to people from both sides of the conflict, not being a mediator but just lending a caring ear. And I've learned from the staff here about respect and justice; everyone deserves a chance to be heard. And the children have a voice, just as much as the adults here do."

Jessica Lehman, a volunteer who recently completed her BVS term at the Columbanus Community of Reconciliation in Belfast, understands that part of her contribution has been living in an ecumenical community, maintaining the community's publications and office systems, and being host to outside groups visiting the facility. She also recognized the importance of "being a smiling face around the house" and "making and drinking endless cups of tea."

"There is a heaviness about the country, an oppression/depression in the very atmosphere. It is a possible combination of tension, fear, violence, grief, and despair. But relationships are important here. If someone drops by, no matter how much work you have, you stop and have a wee cuppa."

She sees this as not something she has given but also something she has received: "It has been an important lesson to let go of the 'get it done' attitude common to the US. Even if there isn't peace here overall, I certainly have found a bit of peace in learning how to slow down."

Cary Jossart at Kilcranny House in Coleraine also noted how the pace of life in Northern Ireland has made an impression. "Things are slower. They take longer. Life doesn't move as quickly." In her work on the organic farm/retreat facility, she finds meaning in her shared work and shared space as they provide neutral, comfortable facilities where people can openly discuss differences, feelings, and issues.

Cary was surprised at first by the number of groups promoting peace in Northern Ireland, but reflects on the role of BVS: "Yes, there are other bodies doing what we do, but I think the organizations we work for would be at quite a loss without their BVSer. The BVSer provides a cost-effective service, which at the least is an extra pair of

Kristen Flory

Cary Jossart works at Kilcranny House and Ballysally Youth and Community Centre, Coleraine, Northern Ireland.

hands doing the work, but is also someone who will challenge ideas, push boundaries, and nudge the organization toward positive growth. I see the BVSer as being an important function—the one who gets to ask the stupid questions as the person 'outside' of the conflict as well as the person who gets to dispel the myths about 'America.'

"What makes us different, too, is the two-year commitment. We have an opportunity to build on the trust we create, form lasting relationships that can stand a few challenges, get past being a novelty, get stuck in major projects and see them grow. Or not grow and start again."

The learning is a cycle. "This is a great place for us as volunteers to be, to learn, and to live. A lot of growth, integration, and understanding need to happen before this conflict can really be resolved. I will bring back stories of the people I have met, of their ordinary and extraordinary lives. I will also share how being a volunteer in Northern Ireland allows us to work at the most basic level for understanding."

At the end of her time in BVS, former volunteer Elaine Campbell reflected that people both at home and in Northern Ireland interpreted her decision to volunteer in many different ways, some seeing it as a "sacrifice," others as "fun."

"I think people want big answers to big questions, but I don't picture life that way at all. It's always big questions and baby steps. BVS has really confirmed my belief in personal responsibility. I know my choices are easier to make than others' choices, but it is gratifying to see people struggle and win."

"Where ya for?"

The question starts a conversation. About culture, about the weather, about the Troubles, about the future. We talk for eight minutes. The conversation lasts much longer.

Holly White is somewhere in the middle of her BVS assignment in Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland, at the Peace and Reconciliation Group. She facilitates cross-community programs for young people and has learned that walking to work is not only a good form of exercise but also an excellent method of testing one's tolerance of rain.

How long can we manage a walk in the park?

One day in October 1998, I was walking home from work. I like to walk through Botanic Park to and from work because I find it relaxing, quiet, and I can avoid breathing fumes.

But on this day, I came to the park gate and it was locked. I had come through in the morning and had not expected this. But the gates close at dusk, and night falls earlier in October. I was really disappointed; at the time I was thinking about joining another BVS project and my time would finish in February anyway. I thought I would not walk through these gates another evening after work. I felt really down, because this was one of life's little pleasures for me. So each evening I walked home an alternate route and that was that.

Then I applied for a visa extension and could stay a while longer in Northern Ireland. I think it was in April that I could walk through the gates again. I was delighted! I loved that first walk through the gates, noticing every detail, every flower, every painted bin. I didn't think about walking through the gate again until I was asked for a story.

Today is September 1. I would have forgotten that pleasure again until I walked to a closed gate. I would have taken for granted my leisurely strolls, even though I do sometimes think about how beautiful it is when I'm there. I don't think about the possibility of a closed door.

I think that is what has happened with the Northern Ireland cease-fire. The calm and relative peace of the past few months has made us forget that we may be coming upon a closed gate. How long will we have to wait for it to reopen?

—ELAINE CAMPBELL, Belfast, Northern Ireland

Elaine Campbell recently finished two and a half years of work at the Multi-Cultural Resource Centre.

BVS in the Balkans

Helping to heal the wounds of war

BY JENNIFER ERICKSON

Frank Klein

Central and Eastern European BVS volunteers in Dubrovnik, Croatia, Thanksgiving 1998.

About the articles

Brethren Volunteer Service volunteers were present in the Balkan region of Europe long before the recent post-Yugoslav wars, but since 1992 there have been more than 20 long-term, and several short-term, volunteers in Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Macedonia. They have served with peace teams, in a children's hospital, on reconstruction and refugee projects, and with women's, youth, and peace organizations.

Currently we have two BVSers in Bosnia-Herzegovina—Jennifer Erickson in Zenica and Frank Klein in Mostar. The newest long-term volunteer, Leslie Smith, arrived recently in Belgrade, Serbia, to work with the "Women in Black" group. Harold Otto, a short-term Brethren Service volunteer (and former Mennonite Central Committee worker in Belgrade), also joined Leslie to help with preparations for Women in Black's recent international conference in Montenegro. And during the summer of 1999, Gail Long, a former BVSer in Serbia, organized a short-term refugee aid project in Macedonia through BVS and American Friends Service Committee. —KRISTIN FLORY

I am Jennifer Erickson and I work for Medica Infoteka in Zenica, Bosnia-Herzegovina. This is a local NGO (non-governmental organization) founded in 1993 by a German gynecologist and local women as a response to mass war rape.

Medica encompasses two residential facilities for women and children who are surviving different kinds of trauma. It includes a medical clinic, psychosocial therapy, education and workshops, a daycare center, and Infoteka.

As the current BVSer, I work two afternoons a week in the Kid's House organizing activities, teaching English, and playing with the children. Most of my time, however, is spent in Infoteka.

Infoteka publishes pamphlets, books, and annual bulletins. It also conducts research on women's issues, and does a variety of workshops and training seminars on various subjects pertaining to women. Presently, we are working on a campaign about violence against women, based on research coordinated by Holly Peele, the previous and first BVSer at Medica Infoteka. I help edit and translate publications in English and have begun to research about women and children in the Roma (also known as gypsy) communities in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Some of my most memorable experiences and conversations are from when the Kid's House hosted more than 70 refugee children (and their mothers) from Kosovo during December 1998, and 30 from Sanjak (a Muslim area in Serbia) in April and May 1999. Often the mothers came for coffee and for a brief break from life in refugee camps.

Children and some of the mothers provided translation (between Albanian and Bosnian with refugees from Kosovo) and encouraged communication and cooperation between all children in our daily activities. One of these activities included a large New Year's celebration, with a visit from Santa Claus.

It is due to my experiences and contact with people from Bosnia, Kosovo, and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia that I had a difficult time during the NATO bombing of Serbia in the spring. After hearing the extremely difficult stories of how my friends here survived the war in Bosnia, I could not completely condemn the bombing. But I did not support NATO, and I hope that I never have to be in a situation to understand the feeling of celebration and relief that my Bosnian friends and colleagues felt during the bombing in April and May.

People in Bosnia are still surviving "their" war. There are many positive changes and adjustments being made here, but change never happens overnight. Economic, physical, and emotional challenges have not disappeared since the Dayton peace agreement which formally ended the war in Bosnia.

The most difficult aspect was explaining to myself, my colleagues here, and family and friends in the US that I support neither NATO nor Milosevic and the situation was never a case of good versus bad. I spent a lot of time searching for ways to talk about the situation with these friends that would not awaken terrible memories or provoke analysis of our differences. While the fact is that my Bosnian friends have survived a war and I have not, it is not difficult to find our similarities. There are many.

It is for this reason that I feel it is necessary to have a BVS presence in the Balkans. There is a need for an exchange of information between cultures and religions which is not at the government level. Understanding and communication came through finding our similarities and acknowledging our differences as strengths, something to learn from, rather than as impassable borders.

Frank Klein

Jennifer Erickson

In Mostar, Bosnia, personal relationships matter most

Mladi Most ("Young Bridge") is a youth and community center founded in 1994 by one of our project partner organizations in Berlin (Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste) as an attempt to provide a safe space for youth in this Croat-Muslim divided city. Frank Klein is the sixth BVSer here; his largest project at Mladi Most is teaching Ninpo.

"Ninpo," explains Frank, "is an art which was developed 1,000 to 1,200 years ago in Japan. It combines a variety of eastern philosophies from Zen and Tibetan monks, Indian gurus, Shinto religion, and more. It was developed to end war in Japan, to live peacefully,

Frank Klein

Volunteers Jen Erickson, left, and Holly Peele both worked at a project in Zenica, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

and to understand the self."

Frank has six long-term students and more than a dozen young people are enthusiastic about learning. He is also involved with photography projects, and does some construction work and maintenance for the building and grounds. He writes grant proposals, which include requests for funding for outreach seminars which he creates and facilitates.

Frank explains that while his activities at MM are important, establishing personal relationships with local people is more important. "I'm a person just like everyone else and that's the way I establish deep personal relationships and earn respect. My friend, Hala, a Mostarian, says, 'Being what you are is respected here.'"

In Macedonia refugee camps, delivering clothing and care

Gail Long, who did several long-term projects with BVS in Belgrade, Serbia, worked recently in Macedonia in refugee camps for Kosovar Albanians. Her responsibilities in setting up the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) office there included assessing needs and providing both material and non-material assistance in refugee camps.

AFSC distributed material aid such as food, hygiene products, clothing, baby items, recreational materials, and games. It also provided a means for people to communicate with one another about information regarding missing people. Later, they worked with local activists and women living in the camps.

Activities coordinated by Gail and colleagues included teaching English to girls and women ages 12–24 years, playing volleyball, painting, music, singing, theater workshops, and sewing. During these activities, she developed a close relationship with the girls group learning English.

According to Gail the "generous funding of $10,000 from the Church of the Brethren will enable four local women's groups to reach vulnerable cases of refugees staying with local host families" in several communities in Macedonia.

Each of the four groups had access to commodities, which were purchased and delivered to them for distribution to host families. The money was also used to purchase aid for babies and children.

Advertisement

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From the Collection of

Donald R. Hinks of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

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In addition THOUSANDS OF PERIODICALS, 18th and 19th c. including *The Gospel Visitor*, *The Christian Family Companion*, *Brethren Life and Thought* (3 bound sets + loose copies), *The Inglenook*, *Brethren Missionary Herald*, *Messengers* 1880's on up, etc. Other items too numerous to enumerate include Brethren bonnets with stands, early Brethren pamphlets, tracts, and almanacs, etc.

With each lot purchased, the buyer will receive a free copy of the 205 page book *Brethren Hymn Books and Hymnals 1720-1884*, compliments of the author Donald Hinks.

The *Brethren Auction* is part of a two-day book sale held on Friday, December 17th and Saturday, December 18th, 1999. The Saturday sale is 100% Brethren related. The Friday sale consists of Pennsylvania history, genealogies, Pennsylvania German material and may not be of interest to many Brethren.

Extensive CATALOGS describing the contents and condition of each lot are available for $20.00 which includes postage. Realized prices are an additional $1.50 if desired. Catalogs will be mailed out on November 15th. Make your check out to "December Book Sale", and send to C. E. Spohn, 114 W. Orange St., Lititz, PA 17543.

Bidding on any lot may be by mail, or in person at the sale. Successful mail bidders pay a very slight increase over the floor bids, not the maximum bid you submit. Mail bids are sent to C. E. Spohn, address above, and must arrive no later than three days before the sale.

All catalogued items may be previewed Thursday evening, December 16th, 6 to 9 p.m., during the entire day Friday, Dec. 17th, before the sale on Saturday from 7:00 A.M. until 8:30 A.M., and throughout the sale.

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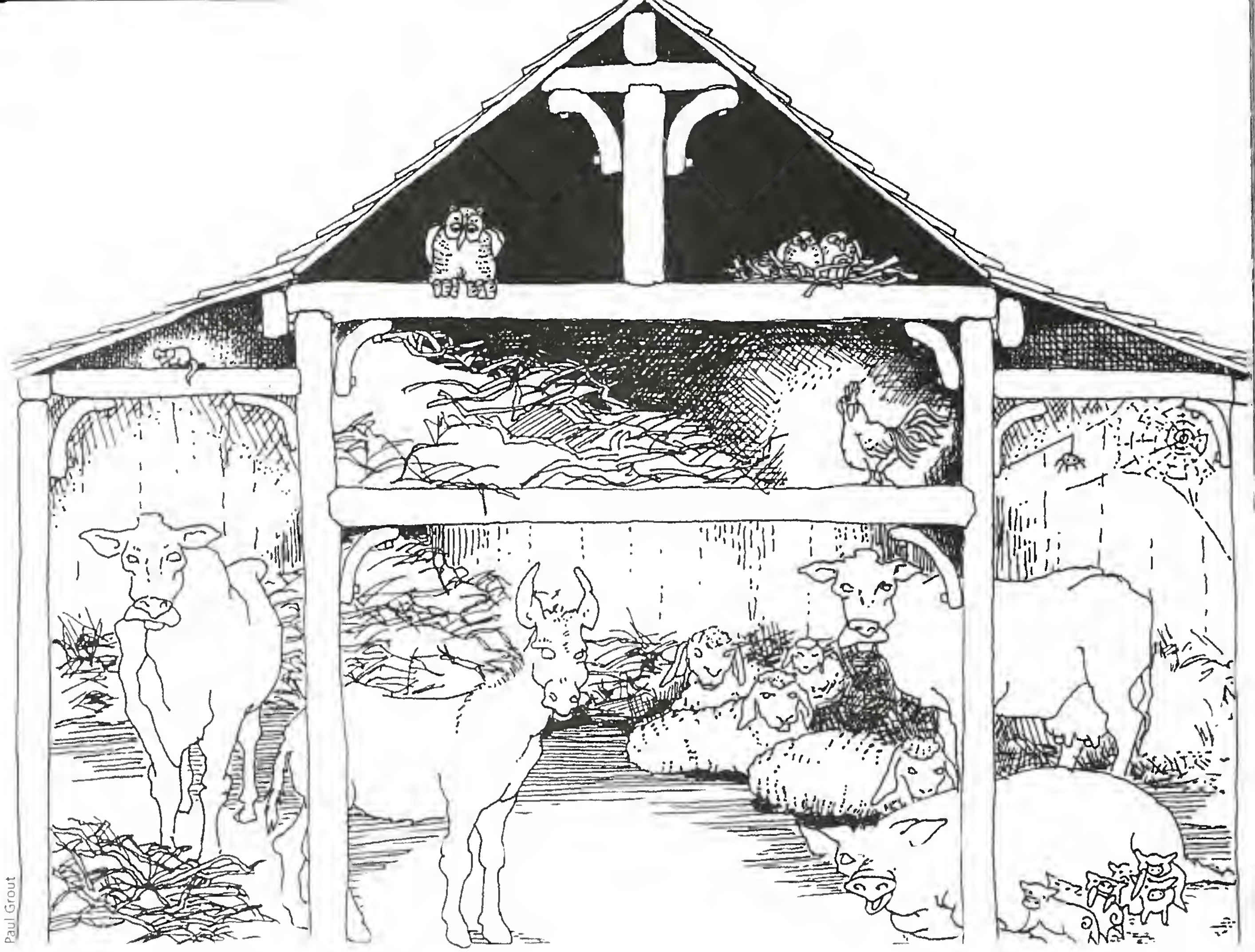


Paul Grout

Is Christ in your Christmas cards?

BY KENNETH L. GIBBLE

I can never quite decide if the tradition of sending Christmas greetings is mostly a blessing or a headache.

If you send even one Christmas card, you have to decide what kind of card to send. Maybe you do as I have sometimes done—buy a box of secular cards to send to your nonreligious friends, and a box of religious cards to send to your friends who share your faith tradition.

On my visit to the local card store, I decided to examine the nonreligious cards first, noting that their display took up twice as many shelves as the religious cards. The secular cards had artwork with lots of winter scenes, wreaths, evergreen trees. They contained messages like: "With best wishes for the holidays and the coming year"; "Greetings of the season and best wishes for the new year"; "May the warmth of the holiday season fill your home with happiness." One card that came dangerously close to a religious theme had a picture of an angel lovingly holding the earth i its hands and the message, "Let us love the world to peace." Kinda cute. Another contained a smiling snowman on the outside and the words "Jolly Holidays" on the inside.

All very nice, warm sentiments guaranteed not to offend anyone, be the recipient Gentile or Jew, Hindu or Buddhist

What about the cards in the religious section? As I expected, the artwork and graphics here were all in extremely good taste. Here were artistic renderings of cherubs playing musical instruments, with the words, "Sometimes, if we listen, we can almost hear the angels." Here, on card after card, were the wise men bearing their gifts, scenes of that little town of Bethlehem, angels singing anthems, and an occasional mother-holding-child This year, at least, shepherds seemed to be out of fashion. The sentiments expressed in words did have at least a slightly more religious flavor than did the cards in the nonreligious section. A few of them actually mentioned "God," as in "God bless you in this joyous season."

Buyers who preferred religious cards could choose from among 50 different offerings. Among those 50, I found one that had the word "Jesus" and two that had the word "Christ." There was but one Bible verse quoted among the 50 cards, and it was from the Old Testament. There were a few cards that used the word "Savior," and a few that contained the phrase "his birth." But apparently the major card companies have decided that good taste at Christmastime means downplaying all that Jesus stuff.

A few years ago I enjoyed reading one of William Raspberry's columns, in which he wrote about receiving a Christmas card from a friend that read: "I sincerely wish that you may enjoy the holiday and/or celebration of your religious, ethnic, or socio-political choice over the coming weeks whenever it/they may fall and whatever t/they may be so named. Now if this card still makes someone angry, the h--- with 'em."

Raspberry said at first he thought the card was funny. But when he reflected on it, he wasn't so sure. The columnist writes, "Friends who used to give you a hearty Merry Christmas!' now offer a generic 'Seasons Greetngs' or, if they're super careful, 'Have a good one.'" He asked: "Is it not just possible that anti-religious bias masquerading as religious neutrality is costing more than we have been willing to acknowledge?"

That is a good question about what the religious holiday called Christmas has become in our society. It has special relevance to those of us for whom Christmas is not merely a season of generic good cheer, not merely a holiday, but a *holy* day.

There is nothing generic about the Bible's account of the first Christmas. Luke, the Gospel writer, tells about a particular event that began with a particular woman named Mary who is pregnant and not married. In the time and place Mary lived, bearing a child out of wedlock was a horrible disgrace. How will Joseph, her fiance, react when she breaks the news to him? Will he end the engagement and hold her up to ridicule and shame? And what will Mary's cousin Elizabeth, the wife of a priest, say when she finds out?

Mary arrives at the home of Elizabeth. Just by looking at Mary, Elizabeth grasps the situation. And Elizabeth cries out: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb." Mary is welcomed with open arms. And then Mary breaks into song, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. . . ."

Mary's song spells out what God is doing in the world: the powerful brought low, the lowly lifted up, the hungry fed, the rich sent away empty. This is religious faith translated into a vision of social justice. So that later, when Luke gives us the details of the son born to Mary, we understand what this birth means. It means that God chooses to come to the world, not as a prince born to a royal family living in a grand palace, but as a child born to an unmarried peasant woman, who must bear her child in a cattle shed. Salvation arrives in the most unlikely ways and places.

All the lovely Christmas cards to the contrary, there was nothing especially beautiful about the first Christmas. The Savior of the world was born to Mary and Joseph, alone and afraid in a strange village. It was Mary's first child. No other woman was there to help her through the birthing—no female relative, not even a midwife. The shepherds may have heard the angels singing that night; there is no evidence that Mary and Joseph heard them.

That's what Christmas means—God coming to us in a way we never could have predicted, in a way that confounds every human expectation, in a way that threatens the status quo. For after this night, nothing will ever be the same.

There are those who, with the eyes of faith, can see what God was up to in that Bethlehem stable. To them—to us—it is good news of great joy. It is why the angels sang that night. It is why we celebrate Christmas with the music of gladness.

So why should we softpedal our joy by wishing our neighbors "Happy Holidays"? If your co-worker or friend is Jewish, surely you can extend greetings for a joyous Hanukkah. If you have Muslim acquaintances, wish them appropriate greetings on their holy days. But as we approach our own holy day, I urge all of us to stop stifling our joy. You do not honor someone else's religious convictions by hiding your own. Let us say "Merry Christmas" to those we meet, and say it with genuine smiles on our faces.

It is disabling for faith to fear what someone will think, to project that fear into an assumption. What if Jesus had worried that people might find his message not quite appropriate, not tasteful enough? Would he have watered down his message? Sweetened it? If so, those spiritually needy people in Jesus' day would have heard either a falsely soothing message, a cheerful "have-a-nice-day," or a message so inoffensively generic that they would have forgotten it within minutes.

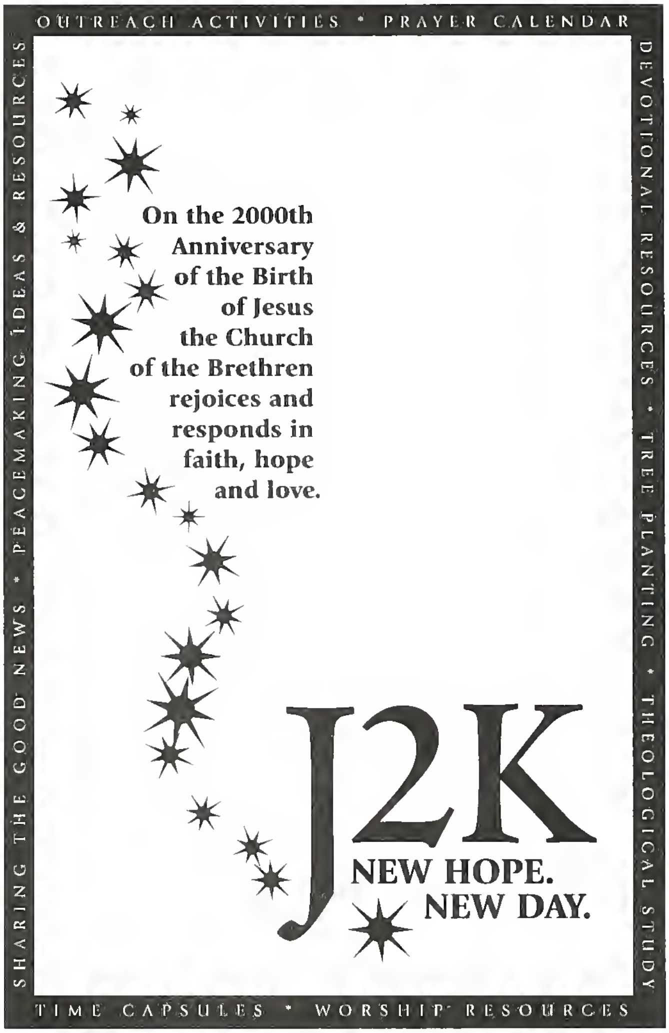
What kind of Christmas card to send? Well, you may have to search a bit for one that says what you want to say. Maybe you can find the kind that are blank inside and write your own greeting. But whatever greeting you send, try to get something in there about the birth of Jesus, the One we call Lord, Savior, Prince of Peace. Have your message express the good news of great joy that his coming represents.

Kenneth L. Gibble is pastor of the Chambersburg (Pa.) Church of the Brethren.

Are you ready?

New materials for the millennium.

BY DAVID RADCLIFF


OUTREACH ACTIVITIES * PRAYER CALENDAR
DEVOTIONAL RESOURCES * TREE PLANTING * THEOLOGICAL STUDY
TIME CAPSULES * WORSHIP RESOURCES
SHARING THE GOOD NEWS * PEACEMAKING IDEAS & RESOURCES
On the 2000th Anniversary of the Birth of Jesus the Church of the Brethren rejoices and responds in faith, hope and love.
J2K
NEW HOPE.
NEW DAY.

Let's face it–entering a new millennium doesn't happen every day. And just like a child turning 10 or the odometer turning 100,000, there's something about zeros at the end of a number that call attention to that moment. It can make us want to sit up and take notice.

Yet it often seems that our own lives and our life as a society tend to drift along, propelled by forces beyond ourselves–marketers, technology, the media, politics–many of which hope we will not pause to think, to reflect, to step back in prayer seeking the presence of God. They are rightly concerned that should we do so, we might choose another course for ourselves and our society, one not in keeping with the carefully orchestrated rhythm they have set for us.

The year 2000 presents us with such an opportunity for reflection. Certainly it contains the requisite zeros–more than any of us have experienced in our lifetimes. More importantly for the Christian community, it reminds us anew of the millennium-founding birth of Jesus, an event that signaled the turning of the age, a marker of significance like no other.

And what better time to celebrate Jesus' 2000th birthday! When have we been in greater need of a moment to stop, look, and listen to the currents coursing through our world? There have been more changes and advances in the past 100 years than perhaps all the other centuries combined.

Yet this is coupled with a greater capacity for wholesale destruction of God's earth and God's people than ever before—this comes with the near-certainty that we will further enhance this capacity in the next millennium. Indeed, many predict that the gap between rich and poor in our nation and world will continue to widen in the next century; nuclear weapons will orbit above us on space launch pads; international tensions will continue to brew around racial, ethnic, and environmental issues. The gospel of our Lord Jesus needs to be proclaimed in its fullness now as never before.

The "J2K: New Hope, New Day" project invites Brethren to rejoice in the commemoration of Jesus' birth, and offers handles for congregations to reflect on and respond to a unique moment in human history. Initiated by the General Board and drawing on gifts of people around the denomination, J2K materials will offer disciplined scripture reading and prayer focus, opportunities for mission and service, celebration and commemoration resources, suggestions for peace action—even a theological conference for church leaders being planned in partnership with Bethany Seminary.

A J2K packet is being mailed this fall so that congregations can make decisions related to participation prior to the dawning of year 2000.

May the turning of the millennium find each of us with our lamps trimmed and our eyes open as we seek God's leading into a new day of hope for the earth and all who dwell therein. M

David Radcliff is director of Brethren Witness and convenor of the J2K planning team.

The Church of the Brethren must continue to be a living witness to others through our actions and our sacrifices.

Avoid 'dragon's breath'

Regarding a proposed name change: I would urge us to go back to the group that developed the tagline, "Continuing the work of Jesus." They seemed to size us up very well and come through with simple yet very accurate words.

Also, I would strongly urge that whatever proposed name change we get serious about, we submit it to our brothers and sisters in Nigeria and the Dominican Republic, as well as to the Haitians and the Koreans.

When Coke went to China, they used "the pause that refreshes," but it came through as "the stench of the dragon's breath." Sometimes what seems good to us may not resonate well with them. They are a part of the family and very much need to be involved.

Wayne Zunkel
Elizabethtown, Pa

For the record

As a member of the Church of the Brethren for many years, I wish to make the point that I disapprove strongly of a name change. Thank you.

Mrs. Harry I. Ewert
Secor, Ill.

Witness for global justice

The theme of this year's Young Adult Conference was "One Creation Under God." We focused on our global neighbors and how our world is deeply divided. The conference made me really search, and ask questions about myself, my future, and my community. I feel I left a different person.

World justice: Did you know that as the top 1.5 billion people of wealth among the more than 6 billion people on the earth, we use 83 percent of the world's resources, while the bottom 1.5 billion use only about 3 percent? Less than 1 of every 1,000 children dies before the age of 5 in the US, while in the bottom 1.5 billion only 1 our of every 10 children will make it past 5 years of age. Is this justice?

Oblivious consumption: The advertising industry in the US spends an astonishing $1,000 per person per year! This multi-billion-dollar industry has bought its way into our households, work, and public spaces. Phrases such as "Just Do It!" and "Be like Mike" are flashed in front of our faces and over our airwaves. They want us to feel good about ourselves and what we have but to always need more. The emphasis is on value through materials and ownership. We live in a world of oblivious consumption, driven simply by a guiltless economy. But it is difficult to think of others around the world when the immediate world around us is telling us to think only of ourselves. Do our actions really make a difference?

Being thankful: As Brethren, many of us try to classify ourselves as not mainstream, but in reality we are probably closer to it than we are away from it. Most of us have more than we need, especially in our material lifestyles. I know I thank God for blessing me with good fortune; yet God has blessed this world with bounty for everyone, not just myself.

For us Christians and our own personal relationships with God, we need to ask the question, "Do we treat God as a 'sovereign' God, or as a 'servant' God? The Church of the Brethren must continue to be a living witness to others through our actions and our sacrifices. We must be an example to other churches, and to the communities in which we live. What I learned personally is this: To be accountable for my decisions and be passionate about the effort I choose to make.

Bruce Wrightsman
Manhattan, Kan.

This essay first appeared in the Western Plains district newsletter.–Ed.

Don't change our name

There is absolutely no reason to change the name of the Church of the Brethren.

I am a grandmother in our church, and a first-class Brethren member. Anyone who thinks women are anything else because of the name of a church is very much mistaken and shortsighted. Don't change our name.

Margaret Yordy
Roanoke, Ill.

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Publication anticipated in 2001
Co-editors:
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Turning Points

New members

Brandts, St. Thomas, Pa.: Paul, Jackie, and Jennifer Snider, Ray and Betty Stull

Broadfording, Hagerstown, Md.: Ginger Allen, Mark Allen, George Burger, Sr., George Burger, Jr., Bernice Burkett, Russell and Cathy Divel, Tammy Fazenbaker, Todd and Lisa Hoffman, George and Thelma Jackson, Richard Lawson, Ned and Millie Lowman, Peggy Burger McLucas, Wade Miller, Nervy Stover

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Eden, N.C.: Jessica Priddy, Amanda Priddy, Heather Via, Bryant Bailey, Bonnie Christley, Jessica Stevens, Katelyn Compton, Tony File, Lisa File, Andrea Lehman, Herb Holmes, Chad Evan Walker

Hooversville, Pa.: Janet Sleppy

Lampeter, Pa.: Pat Folkman, Carl and Eileen Boyle, Kenneth and Emmarene Reed, Lester and Shirley Le Fevre, Charles, Jr. and Diane McDonough, Jean Sullenberger

Maple Grove, New Paris, Ind.: Patricia Bell, Anisa Berkey, Kristen Carrick

Mohrsville, Pa.: Clarence and Donna Brobst

Onekama, Mich.: Barry Barto, Al and Deanna Pattison, Angela Kmiecik, Marcia Johnson, Tessie Johnson

Pyrmont, Rossville, Ind.: Randy and Kathy Hufford, Brandon Patrick, Clifton Frier

Roaring Spring, Pa.: Jenni Imler

University Park, Hyattsville, Md.: Daniel Dodd

Wedding anniversaries

Baughman, Daniel and Elfreida, Lampeter, Pa., 50

James, Glenn and Ida Jean, Akron, Ohio, 50

Lehman, Margaret and Elmer, Washingtonville, Ohio, 55

Lynch, Marvin and Nancy, New Carlisle, Ohio, 50

Moore, Carl and Emma Jean, Fairway, Kan., 55

Smeltzer, Howard and Sara, Greensburg, Pa., 50

Watkins, Lawrence and Ruth, New Paris, Ind., 60

White, Max and Betty, Harrisonburg, Va., 50

Deaths

Adams, Richard O., 72, Warrenton, Va., Sept. 1

Armentrout, Martha O., 84, Singers Glen, Va., Sept. 11

Black, Verneda M., 77, Claysburg, Pa., Sept. 8

Bowman, Vera G., 86, Bridgewater, Va., Sept. 11

Bucher, Ethel M., 96, Canton, Ill., July 14

Carson, Mary L., 81, Canton, Ill., April 22

Cave, Clara M., 76, Luray, Va., Sept. 21

Cleer, Lucy M., 88, Canton, Ill., April 12

Cripe, Margaret Arnold, 85, Hammond, Ill., Sept. 16

Dodd, Marjorie, 70, Bowie, Md., Sept. 11

Gordon, James F., 47, Timberville, Va., Sept. 10

Greiner, Dorothy, 71, Elizabethtown, Pa., Sept. 5

Harsh, Melvin R., 78, Eglon, W.Va., Aug. 24

Heald, Doris, 83, Defiance, Ohio, June 20

Hirsch, Louis S., 80, LaPlace, Ill., Aug. 3

Kiracofe, Kathryn, 92, Bridgewater, Va., Sept. 13

Koons, Olive E., 85, Fredericksburg, Pa., Aug. 26

Leer, John A., Jr., 76, Vero Beach, Fla., Aug. 17

Mongold, Elizabeth C., 86, Moorefield, W.Va., Sept. 1

Mongold, Alma R., 85, South Fork, W.Va., Sept. 20

Ratliff, Neva H., 81, Bridgewater, Va., Sept. 9

Sager, Roscoe R., 88, Quicksburg, Va., Sept. 6

Sheffer, Anna Frances, 75, Churchville, Va., Sept. 15

Simmons, R. V., 93, Bridgewater, Va., Sept. 19

Smith, Tudie M., 96, Moorefield, W.Va., Sept. 18

Summers, Marvin F., 90, Timberville, Va., Sept. 7

Turner, Miller D., 71, Criders, Va., Sept. 11

Varner, Erma L., 90, Kansas City, Mo., April 20

Wagaman, Thomas L., 63, York Pa., July 29

Whitmore, Harry L., 82, Bridgewater, Va., Sept. 20

Wildasin, Itilda M., 86, Hanover, Pa., Aug. 13

Classified Ads

FOR RENT

Deer Lodge: a north woods retreat secluded home, sleeps 4; year-round recreation area; fall color; Ottawa National Forest ski trails out the back door; down-hill ski at nearby Powder Horn Mountain; North Country Trail passes in front; private tennis court; Finnish Log Cabin bunkhouse sleeps 5; walk to Lake Superior's pristine Black River Harbor, beaches, fishing, gorgeous waterfalls. Located 20 miles north of Ironwood, MI, far-western Upper Peninsula. Available September – June, starts $75. Reservations: Monica at 906-932-1898. Further info: Ikenberry 906-932-4299 or 316-241-3258 or gikenber@yahoo.com

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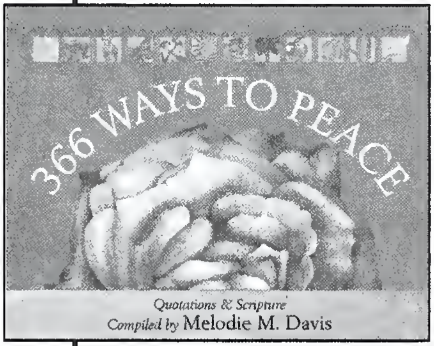

You are about to walk for a year in the company of thinkers, who, for the most part, have lived out their commitment to peacemaking. They have made profound and powerful statements for peace.

People from all walks of life and with many points of view can benefit from this perpetual peace calendar. Here is a rich resource of quotes and Scripture verses to keep handy and refer to every day!

Spiral calendar, $12.99; in Canada $19.29

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Editorial

The rich young ruler, cont.

What do you suppose ever happened to the rich young ruler in Luke 18? All we are told is that after Jesus gave him the instruction to divest his wealth he became sad "for he was very rich." But what did he do the next day? Or the next year? We're usually hard on the guy because we assume that he simply rejected Jesus's advice and headed out to buy a new BMW. But I don't think so. I think the rich young ruler has gotten a bad rap.

You remember the story. After he told Jesus he had obeyed the commandments since his youth, Jesus told the man there was just one more thing: "Sell all that you own and distribute the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me."

I can see how he would have been sad. Or mad. After all, Zacchaeus only gave up half and Jesus went to his house to celebrate. Or what about the tithe? Even some Brethren don't manage a tenth. Why do I get singled out to fork over everything? Where's the justice, Jesus?

But once he calmed down he thought about what Jesus had said, going over and over it in his mind. He hadn't been given a time limit. Being a person of faith, he began. Giving was difficult for him at first, but the more he gave the easier it got. He gradually discovered the rewards of giving to be greater than the rewards of wealth. He gave until he became one of the few whom Kahlil Gibran describes as "those who give as in yonder valley the myrtle breathes its fragrance into space." For it is "through the hands of such as these God speaks, and from behind their eyes God smiles upon the earth" *(The Prophet)*.

It would be nice if we could talk about giving, and learn about it, in church more than we do. By making financial gifts a nearly forbidden subject, we deprive ourselves of much of the joy and adventure of the Christian life. After all, we are lavish givers anyway. Because of our love for God we give our spirit through our time, our service, our worship, our love for others. Money can expand and extend the universe over which we can project our spirit. But if we're not careful, money can also be a distraction to that very spirit we'd like to give away.

Liberating our spirit can also liberate our money. Here's the way it was explained to me at a Ministry of Money workshop recently: There are numerous ways we can be light or shadow, ways we can give ourselves aw or keep our spirits tightly to ourselves. David Erickso the founder of Samaritan Inns, a housing ministry for recovering alcoholics in Washington, D.C., offered th questions to test our giving spirits:

Do I affirm my uniqueness, or deny my identity? If I deny my own identity, I am likely to deny that of other especially the poor. But if I affirm my uniqueness, I re ize that who I am does not depend on what I possess.

Do I live in confidence, or fear? Fear becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, but faith that God is at work offers me freedom to risk giving away the security of money.

Do I seek to control, or to offer freedom? The limited power my money gives me makes me take too much responsibility. But I can truly be empowered when I share the load.

Do I give permission, or do I guard my privacy? My money allows me to retreat too often into my privacy. The challenge is to give permission to others to be part my life.

Is the spirit I give the spirit of despair, or of hope? Am overcome by the chaos of life, or do I understand that chaos is normal? Chaos is a precondition for creativity. Letting go and entering the chaos helps me discover wh is truly creative.

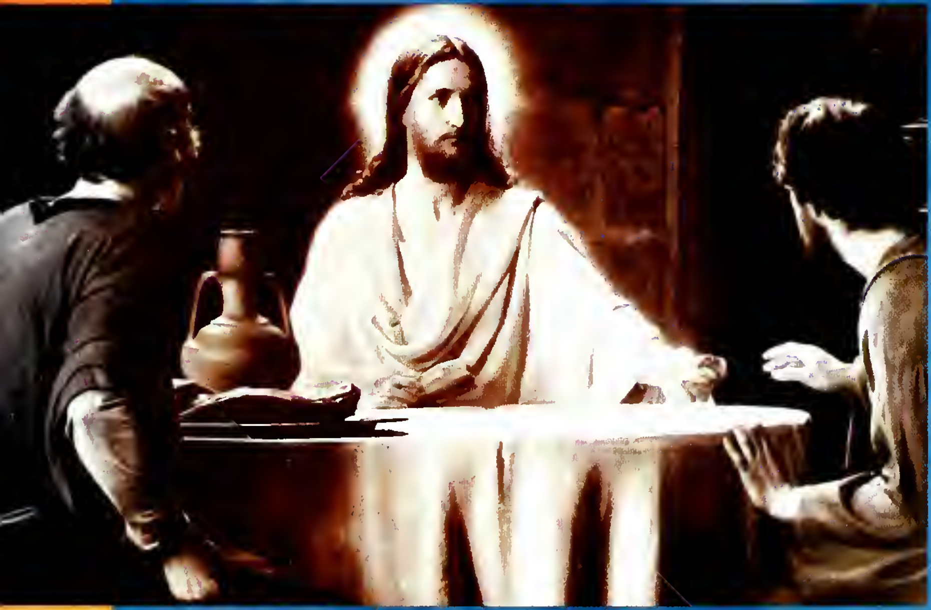
So it is time for me to let go, have faith, take risks, an get creative. It's time to revive my giving spirit. I have just received a letter from David Huffaker, financial resource counselor for the General Board. "During this century-ending time of reflection," he writes, "take a moment to inventory the blessings that God has given you. And if the time seems right, make your last best gif of the century now to one of the life-changing ministrie of our church." Gift of the century? That sounds like fun.

The rich young ruler eventually became the poor old non-ruler, but he was rich in spirit and he'd had a good life. He'd known all along that this life was just th beginning of life so he began planning early for the long term—not for retirement, but for the next 200 years or so. That's why long ago he'd asked Jesus about eternal life, and why he took seriously the answer. Now he was ready to go back to Jesus and tell him the rest of the story.—FLETCHER FARRAR

Alive to the Spirit of Christ

Where two or three are gathered around Christ, as at Emmaus, community happens. Where followers devote themselves "to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers," as in Acts, community is deepened. Where believers respond to the living presence of Christ, then and now, community is transformed.

Yet where does a congregation turn when it seeks to enlist more fully the gifts God has given to its people? To reach out to a more diverse neighborhood? To revise—and energize—its forms of ministry?


Detail of *The Supper at Emmaus*, by Carl Bloch

Congregational Life Teams help churches discern needs, identify resources, envision possibilities. Team members offer workshops on spiritual formation, evangelism training, stewardship education, rural and small membership churches, urban and ethnic ministries, worship planning and worshipful work. The teams help congregations partner with districts, the General Board, and other agencies.

But the crux of Congregational Life Teams goes beyond the planning of programs. It is in the practice of discernment, discernment graced by encounter with the risen Lord. A community alive to the spirit of Christ is an empowered community, a transformed community.

Give us a call at Congregational Life Teams and let us explore how we may journey together with the living Christ.

Congregational Life Teams

Church of the Brethren General Board
1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120 (800 323-8039)

Frank Klein

Seek peace, and pursue it

As the most violent century in human history comes to a close, the challenge to the church is this: to provide the world a clear witness to the gospel message of peace and reconciliation.

That is, to keep alive Isaiah's vision of the peaceable kingdom. To proclaim Jesus' beatitude of peacemaking. To root our actions for peace and justice in prayer, in the peace that comes from God.

Je

In Europe, where the Church of the Brethren was born nearly three hundred years ago, Brethren Volunteer Service workers bring a healing presence on both sides of conflict. They live among the poor and broken. They build bridges for reconciliation. They demonstrate alternatives to the deadly cycle of violence.

The Christmas Achievement Offering is a reminder of a tenet Brethren have long cherished: that peacemaking is the believer's calling. The offering asks for your support of the church's volunteers who are agents of peace in Europe, but its appeal goes beyond that. It invites you to renew your personal commitment to be a faithful witness to the peace of Christ.

In Europe and in our own nation, in our own communities and congregations, in our own households and individual lives, the times cry out for us to respond anew to the plea of the psalmist: Seek peace, and pursue it.

Christmas Achievement Offering

Church of the Brethren General Board

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Church of the Brethren December 1999 www.brethren.org

Messenger

Rejoice!

All we have is a gift from God.
Celebrate the many gifts God has entrusted to your care.

Remember!

Reflect on the bountiful blessings that you are
privileged to manage for God.

Respond!

"Freely you have received, freely give" Matthew 10:8
Keep what you truly need. The rest?
Invest wisely what is God's in the work of God's Kingdom.

Your Congregation. Your District. The Church of the Brethren General Board.
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Thanks for your support.

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Messenger

Vol. 148, No. 11 December 1999 www.brethren.org

Editor: Fletcher Farrar
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Publisher: Wendy McFadden
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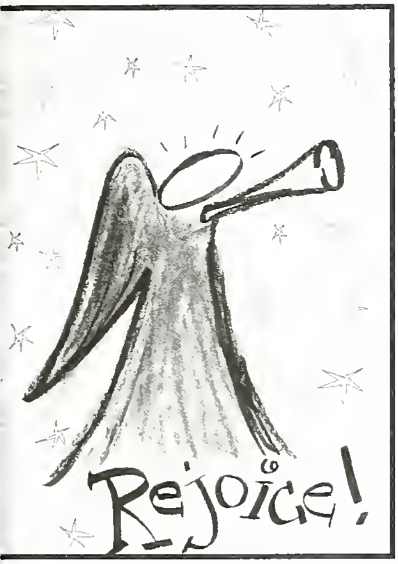
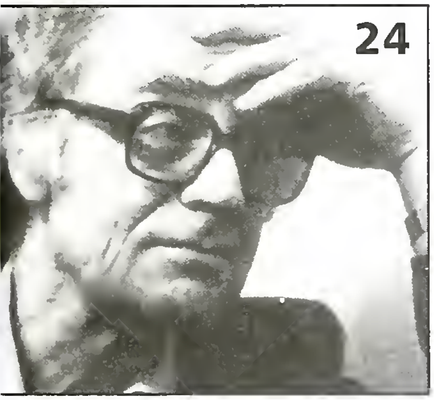


On the cover: "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior" (Luke 1:47). Mary's response to the angel Gabriel inspired Marianne Sackett's design of this month's cover and is a fitting meditation for the Christmas season.



Features

14 Living on the edge in Honduras
Brethren Witness director David Radcliff explains how Honduras has become a "spiritual way station" on his pilgrimage of faith. From his experiences on an August trip there with a Brethren group, he describes conditions in Honduras and how Brethren are helping.

19 Take a faith expedition
The Church of the Brethren is organizing several trips to other countries and cultures, where travelers often encounter spiritual vitality in the face of material poverty. If you go along, your faith may never be the same.

20 The witness of Miami Haitian
Many who worship at Eglise des Freres Haitiens came to the US as needy refugees. But one reason the Miami Haitian Church of the Brethren is the fastest growing congregation in its district is that it serves the needs of others.

24 Troublesome saint
Hans de Boer of Germany has spent a lifetime witnessing for peace. On a recent US tour he made numerous Brethren stops, including one to the home of Dale W. Brown, who writes, "His life story is more fascinating than fiction."

26 1999 annual index
A handy listing of the authors, congregations, names of people, and subjects covered in MESSENGER this year.

Departments

2 From the Publisher
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31 Turning Points
32 Editorial

From the Publisher

There are 23 clocks at my house, give or take a clock and not counting watches. Maybe that's not all that many, but it feels like a lot whenever we go through a time change.

With all these clocks, I can measure time from just about any spot in the house. There are four clocks in the kitchen alone. For some reason it feels essential to keep track of time, to monitor how closely we're keeping to a schedule. In the mornings, we watch the clocks minute by minute, nervously measuring the amount of time left before the arrival of the schoolbus. In the evenings, we try to beat the clock to get everyone picked up by the appointed times.

It seems as if we humans alternate between anxiously watching time slip by and impatiently wishing away the next period of time. Half the time I'm admonishing my children to hurry. And half the time they're wishing it were already tomorrow, or Christmas, or next year . . . or whatever.

I do know that once again time has flown and I'm surprised to find myself on the cusp of a new year. Once again I am disoriented by what feels like the premature arrival of the holiday season. But the really big clock right now is the ubiquitous millennial clock that can be found in every store and on every possible merchandise item. We all know there are only a few thousand minutes left of the year and of the millennium.

I have been dismissing the Y2K hype with almost no thought, but part of me wonders why I'm not reflecting more on the waning minutes of the year. Should I bury a time capsule? Someday when I talk with my grandchildren about the old days, will I wish I had paid more attention?

As I anticipate the moment when the clocks reach midnight on Dec. 31 and we turn the last page of the 1999 calendar, a millennial hymn comes to mind:

> *A thousand ages in thy sight are like an evening gone,*
> *short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun.*
>
> *Time, like an ever-rolling stream, soon bears us all away.*
> *We fly forgotten, as a dream dies at the opening day.*
>
> *O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,*
> *be thou our guard while troubles last, and our eternal home.*

Wendy McFadden

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Marty Barlow

Pastor Glenn Bollinger *of the Beaver Creek congregation recites baptismal vows to Sara Martin as pastor Jim Beckwith of the Montezuma congregation looks on.*

Baptism brings about 'mother-daughter' reunion

Brethren have been baptizing in the cold streams of Rockingham County, Va., for more than 200 years. Two congregations extended that tradition on Sept. 19 as 12 candidates obeyed the call to "repent and be baptized."

The Beaver Creek and Montezuma congregations met beside the waters of Beaver Creek for the baptismal service. Pastors Glenn E. Bollinger of Beaver Creek church and James M. Beckwith of Montezuma church led the service standing waist-deep in the creek.

The joint service had special meaning to the congregations because of their close relationship over the years. Montezuma began as a preaching point of the Beaver Creek congregation around 1878, then separated as a daughter congregation in 1962. It has grown to a membership of 422.

Fragmentary records indicate that there was an active congregation at Beaver Creek as early as 1806, and that Brethren in the area had been having meetings and baptizing for a number of years before that.

After a call to worship and a hymn, candidates took their vows and were baptized three times forward. The joint congregations then silently renewed their own baptismal vows, then welcomed the new members before being sent forth "for the glory of God and for your neighbor's good."—**Bill Wood**, *Beaver Creek Church of the Brethren*

'Y'all come' to Faith Renewal services

"Twenty-seven!" was Pastor Glenn McCrickard's response when asked how many children came to the chancel area for the children's moments on Sunday, Sept. 19.

Emily Shonk Edwards, newly installed director of Christian education and youth ministries, secured three youth to serve as worship leaders that morning and four more sang special music. It was a marvelous way to begin a series on "Widening the Welcome Through Evangelism."

The annual Fall Faith Renewal Services at the Cloverdale (Va.) Church of the Brethren took place September 19-22. The theme for this series coincided with the New LIFE (Living in Faithful Evangelism) Ministries unit being studied. This term several youth and many adults are using the book *Widening the Welcome of Your Church: Biblical Hospitality and the Vital Congregation*, by Fred Bernhard and Steve Clapp.

Julie M. Hostetter, coordinator of Congregational Life Team Area 3, was the preacher and facilitator for the services. On Sunday morning, the children's message was "You're Invited" and the sermon was "Ya'll Come!" based on Genesis 18:1-8 and Matthew 25:31-46. Services and other activities focusing on the theme continued daily for the next three days.

An unusual format for fall faith renewal services? Yes, but then this is an unusual congregation. In the neighborhood, Glenn McCrickard has been identified as "the pastor of the community center." This is a congregation that is in ministry and mission to its sisters and brothers — and its neighbors.

300 years of marriage. *Longmeadow Church of the Brethren, Hagerstown, Md., honored four couples celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary this year and four other couples celebrating 25 years of marriage. "We are very proud of all the years of love and joy that these couples bring to our setting," says Pastor Byrl E. Shaver II. Those celebrating 50th wedding anniversaries are, from left, Ellis and Eloise Strite, Glenn and Martha Strite, Mark and Betty Lou Keener, and Herman and Mary Shipp.*

County Board honors long-serving pastor

Luther Hopkins, 84, pastor of the Smith River Church of the Brethren, Stuart, Va., for the past three decades, was honored at the Woolwine October Festival for his many works of volunteerism and generosity.

The Patrick County (Va.) Board of Supervisors proclaimed Oct. 9 as "Luther Hopkins Day."

The proclamation stated that Luther "has dedicated many years of his life towards the betterment of

Patrick County and its people...has served as the pastor of Smith River Church of the Brethren for more than 30 years, as well as having conducted numerous revivals during that time . . . has served in many capacities throughout the years, including jail ministry, Boy Scout leader, social services board and Safety Rope member, chaplain in workplaces and at the local hospital, Bible study at the nursing home and hospital . . . (and) has been a world traveler, sharing his learning experiences with many organizations, students, and friends through slide presentations."

Luther has also "brightened numerous days through the generous sharing of beautiful roses from his garden, to the extent of becoming known to many as 'The Rose Man.'"

Stewardship in a box meets resource needs

A Stewardship Resource Box has been developed by Linda McCauliff of the Congregational Life Team Area One, who organized the materials in partnership with the district executive ministers and associates from the five districts of that area. A resource box was presented to each of the five districts and to each of the Congregational Life Team coordinators.

The resource box is a treasure chest of resource materials. It includes samples of curricula for every age level, Bible studies, sermon and worship aids, videos on giving and consumerism, workbooks on biblical stewardship, Annual Conference statements, the new *Giving* magazine, and a bibliography of numerous materials.

Lori Conn, a member of the Pike Run congregation, Somerset, Pa., and a member of the Western Pennsylvania District stewards commission, commented, "You don't know how timely, and how needed these materials are!"

Thirty years later, returning for more hurricane repairs

A group of nine Brethren volunteers from Northern Ohio recently traveled to Biloxi, Miss., to repair homes damaged by Hurricane Georges.

For one of the nine it was a reunion of sorts. Tom Lavy of the Hartville (Ohio) Church of the Brethren was returning to the same area where he spent 11 months of his Brethren Volunteer Service term in 1970.

Thirty years ago, in August 1969, Hurricane Camille devasted the Gulf Coast. Pass Christian, Gulfport, and Biloxi, Miss., bore the brunt of Camille's fury.

Tom and four other members of his BVS unit arrived in January 1970. For the first two months the group stayed in government trailers while they tore down some damaged buildings, built new homes, and did remodeling on others. It was on-the-job training for Tom, who was one year out of high school with no previous carpentry experience. Later the volunteers accepted the offer of a homeowner to live in his Pass Christian house in exchange for fixing it up.

On this return trip, Tom and the Northern Ohio volunteers spent an afternoon driving around Pass Christian looking for anything familiar to Tom after 30 years. He thinks he identified a house they fixed up but wasn't sure.—Debbie Beer

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Peace marchers *in Fort Wayne, Ind.*

Peace witness goes on parade

Charles E. Anderson of the Beacon Heights Church of the Brethren, Fort Wayne, Ind., recruited 25 peace advocates to walk in the Annual Three Rivers Parade last summer.

Among the signs they carried were "Curb the Violence," "Love Casts Out Fear," and "Arms are for hugging." A larger sign, "Handshakes not handguns," was censored by parade officials, who refused to allow the group to carry it in the parade.

Reunion of relief volunteers. *Front row, from left: Harold McNett, Bridgewater, Va.; Al Nisly, Uniontown, Ohio; Eli Beachy, Franklin, Ky.; and Paul Bucher, Lititz, Pa. Back row: Nelson Schumacher, Pandora, Ohio; Don Klippenstein, Goshen, Ind.; J. Olen Yoder, Middlebury, Ind.; and Paul Heisey, Schaefferstown, Pa.*

Hoss Wranglers reunite

At the end of World War II, 33 men boarded the S.S. Clarksville Victory with 744 horses which they cared for en route to Danzig, Poland. They were members of the Church of the Brethren as well as Mennonite and other denominations.

Recently eight members of that group, along with family members, attended a reunion at Camp Mack, Milford, Ind. This was the 10th reunion of the volunteers of 1945.

These "Hoss Wranglers" reminisced about when they first saw Danzig on Dec. 27, 1945. Once a city of 150,000, there were only 50 homes left standing after the war. They watched films of their original mission, the "boys who helped build bridges over the highway of life."—Dorothy J. Heisey

Orndorff elected freshman president

Megan Orndorff, a member of Calvary Church of the Brethren, Winchester, Va., was elected president of the freshman class at Bridgewater College, Bridgewater, Va.

The freshman class, the Class of 2003, numbers 347 members.

Megan, a psychology and sociology major, is the daughter of Mitch and Pam Orndorff, Winchester, Va. She is a member of the campus chapter of Habitat for Humanity and the Brethren Student Fellowship. She also works with Temptations, a campus group which promotes alcohol abuse prevention.

Hillcrest celebrates 50th anniversary

Brethren Hillcrest Homes, the Church of the Brethren retirement community in La Verne, Calif., celebrated its 50th anniversary this year. The occasion was marked by a formal dinner and entertainment for a crowd of about 300. Rebekah Ann Keller, Miss California of 1997, served as emcee.

Hillcrest president Charles E. Cable applauded the vision of the La Verne Church of the Brethren and Martha Lear, a local activist, for founding Hillcrest. It opened in 1949 with 13 residents. Today there are 360 seniors living there in single-family and congregate residences.

Youth evangelists use drama, baseball

The Blue River Church of the Brethren, Columbia City, Ind., completed an aggressive summer youth missions program, "Going Global, '99." The program included trips to Costa Rica and Northern Ireland, as well as to Kentucky.

For the trip to San Jose, Costa Rica, the group of five youth from the church joined a group of 19 others. They traveled to many communities presenting a drama, "The Journey." Mark A. Ray, the youth pastor, said the group used the drama and personal evangelism to share the gospel in parks, public schools, prisons, and rural villages.

Another group visited the community of Lisburn, Northern Ireland, 10 miles south of Belfast. Each night in a neighborhood called Glenmore they taught American baseball to local youth. "Baseball became a huge draw," Ray said. "We spent a significant amount of time building relationships with teens in order to share the gospel with them."

Midland church busy with mission work

A member of the Midland (Va.) Church of the Brethren describes the congregation as "a little country church that says, 3Here is a sampling of recent activities.

In August the church participated in a community revival under the theme "Come and see." Eight area congregations cooperatively presented worship rallies in the auditorium of a local high school, with one night featuring a Christian rock band to attract youth.

In response to Hurricane Floyd, the congregation gathered 4,000 pounds of relief supplies and shipped it to flood victims in North Carolina.

The church helped to organize an October visit by Juan Figueroa, pastor of the Caimito Christian Center, San Juan, Puerto Rico. Members of the Midland congregation have made several mission trips to Puerto Rico to work in partnership with the Caimito congregation.—Kanoa A. S. Ratliff

The CoBACE steering committee, *back row: Audrey Finkbiner, Dean Wenger, and Donna McKee Rhodes. Front row: Donna Forbes Steiner, Julie Hostetter, and Kitty Collier.*

Christian educators group plans anniversary year

The year 2000 will be the 20th anniversary of CoBACE, the Church of the Brethren Association of Christian Educators. Plans for celebrating the anniversary at next year's Annual Conference were discussed at the CoBACE steering committee's annual meeting, which was Sept. 30 – Oct. 1 at Camp Blue Diamond in Petersburg, Pa.

Members of the group participated in the Ecumenical Church Educators Event in Chicago this past February, and this coming spring will resume their own annual professional growth experience. The group also spent some time envisioning the future ministry of CoBACE.

Those serving on the committee include Donna Forbes Steiner, chair; Audrey Finkbiner, secretary; Kitty Collier, treasurer; and Dean Wenger, professional growth conference coordinator. Donna McKee Rhodes will continue as the newsletter editor, and Julie M. Hostetter joined the group as the Congregational Life Team representative.

"In Touch" features news of congregations, districts, and individuals. Send story ideas and photos to "In Touch," Messenger, *1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120.*

News

Fall General Board meeting cel

The Church of the Brethren General Board came together for its fall meetings Oct. 15-19 with leaders proclaiming a "new day" for the board and the denomination it serves. That spirit showed itself throughout the proceedings, as an atmosphere of optimism, excitement, and joyful celebration surrounded the business sessions and other events.

Again using the "Worshipful Work" model for conducting business, the board employed hymns, stories, prayers, and other sharing to surround the tasks at hand. A vibrant worship center designed by General Board staff members Howard Royer, Beth Sollenberger Morphew, and others provided a centerpiece for the theme, "The Gifts of God for the People of God."

Seldom does a series of reports and updates generate much enthusiasm, but it happened at the General Board table in Elgin.

One by one, a stream of speakers shared good news and optimism from their respective ministries. Executive director Judy Mills Reimer lifted up the need for the board and its staff to be engaged in storytelling, "keeping images of God's ministry before us." Through stories, she said, the passion and excitement of ministry comes alive, and sharing them helps to reveal God to us.

As part of this goal, she reported that each leadership team area of the General Board staff would be conducting "benchmark retreats" to set measurable objectives for the next three years, to be reported in March 2000. She concluded her opening remarks by proclaiming several times, "Our future is bright."

A citation went to Nevin Dulabaum, who left the General Board staff in August after nearly five years as manager of news services to take position with Brethren Benefit Trust. The commendation particularly praised his effort in bringing the church into the electronic age with the creation of the www.brethren.org Web site and other initiatives.

Merv Keeney, director of Global Mission Partnerships, reported progress on a possible partnership in ministry in Tijuana, Mexico. Keeney also reported on the denomination's energetic mission in the Dominican Republic, saying "the church has become engaged in this mission like none in recent history." He said the mission brought particular excitement at a mission roundtable meeting in New Windsor, Md., in August.

The New Church Development Advisory Committee brought a sense of great potential and energy in a different mission field, saying the church's No. 1 priority needs to be starting new churches in major metropolitan areas, where Brethren often aren't found. The committee will meet again Feb. 1-2.

A follow-up report on the recent redesign of the General Board brought generally high ratings from those who responded, although only

tes a 'new day'

Walt Wiltschek

General Board staff members *Merv Keeney (second from left) and Shantilal Bhagat (center) discuss the church in India with Walter Christian, Milton Pandya, and Shailesh Christian, all members of the Naperville (Ill.) Church of the Brethren.*

Walt Wiltschek

Workcamp experience: *Parker Swanson, 14, of Elgin, Ill., told General Board members how his experience with mentally disabled adults at a Church of the Brethren workcamp enriched his faith and changed his life.*

about a quarter of survey forms were returned.

David Radcliff, director of Brethren Witness, said that a new series of resources coming from the office will help congregations put the Children and Violence resolution passed by the 1999 Annual Conference into action in local settings. Another resource, designed to celebrate the new millennium, is also coming in the form of "J2K: New Hope, New Day." It emphasizes regular reading of Scripture, has a "House of Refuge" effort to raise funds for new church development, and has other ideas for congregations. Radcliff said the package would be sent to congregations in November.

Perhaps the greatest excitement of all came via the Brethren Service Center report brought by Reimer and Emergency Response/Service Ministries manager Stan Noffsinger, who also is coordinating the work of the center.

Noffsinger called the center's ministries "a story worth telling" and highlighted efforts to promote the center and to work ecumenically in disaster relief and elsewhere. With the General Board's assertion in August that the Brethren Service Center would remain a key part of its future, Noffsinger said he wants it to be a "mission point" for the church, a place known for service and continuing the work of Jesus.

Celebration took center stage at an evening banquet for board members, staff, and others as dinner set the stage for a time of singing and storytelling. Warren and Theresa Eshbach of Thomasville, Pa., led an upbeat hymn sing surrounding eight tales of real ministry in the church.

General Board member Christy Waltersdorff told about a 1999 denominational junior high workcamp in Lake Geneva, Wis., where youth worked among the physically and mentally disabled. Fourteen-year-old workcamp participant Parker Swanson of Elgin, Ill., said the experience helped him decide to take a membership class at his church.

Sue Grubb, orientation coordinator of Brethren Volunteer Service, told of a BVS orientation trip to a homeless shelter in Baltimore. Congregational Life Team member Duane Grady brought stories of congregational renewal in Indiana.

Other stories touched on a Spanish-language service at the Harrisburg (Pa.) First church and a consultation on Cross-Cultural Ministries, the Family Farm Drought Response organized by Emergency Response /Service Ministries in cooperation with numerous other ecumenical agencies, mission in the Dominican Republic through the eyes of a 10-year-old, Rachel Gross' work with the Death Row Support

Project, and an emerging peace process in Sudan.

Howard Royer, General Board staff for interpretation, concluded the litany of ministry with a story of his own, saying, "You're not a wave, you're part of an ocean. . . . We're part of something so much bigger than us or any congregation."

Board calls for equal treatment of women in ministry

One major business item had the General Board wrestling with the best way to put forth an emphasis on women in ministry, wanting to call attention to the issue and seeking to open more doors to women ministers in the Church of the Brethren.

After much discussion, the board settled on bringing a resolution developed by Allen Hansell, General Board director of ministry, and passed it unanimously.

The resolution lifts up a 1958 Annual Conference decision to grant women "full and unrestricted rights in the ministry" and other polity papers, including the 1999 Ministerial Leadership paper. It points out the disparity between men and women in ministry in the denomination, with women making up only 13 percent of those serving as pastors and many more being trained than being placed.

It presents four points calling for equal treatment of men and women in ministry and requests a study guide from the Office of Ministry to look at "biblical, historical, and contemporary" materials that bear on the issue.

The General Board discussed the role and work of the Church of the Brethren Washington Office, which lost its full-time coordinator and other staff in the redesign process.

Presented with the feeling that it is unsatisfactory to continue to operate the Washington Office with only a volunteer working 15 hours a week, plus a Brethren Volunteer Service volunteer, the General Board was asked to reflect on what the Washington Office has meant to the Church of the Brethren over the years.

Several board members spoke about their memories of the leadership of the Washington Office during the wars in Korea and Vietnam. Some said the Washington Office had been influential in their own faith formation.

After the discussion, the board approved a motion saying that it "strongly affirms" the presence of the Washington Office, and asking the staff to proceed with ideas for future staffing and funding and bring a report to the March meeting.

Acting on a proposal by Merv Keeney, director of Global Mission Partnerships, the board voted to establish an Emerging Mission Fund.

Money raised for this fund would be used to plant new churches both in the United States and internationally, with the intention of helping new missions to become established during their first 10 years of existence. It will help to facilitate the work of the Mission and Ministries Planning Council, created during the redesign to facilitate new mission ideas and efforts.

This new General Board fund grew out of recommendations affirmed by the board in 1996 and 1997 and discussions with the ad hoc Brethren World Mission group, which had asked for more balance between humanitarian mission efforts and evangelistic outreach.

Keeney also brought an update on reconciliation efforts between the Church of North India and the "sep-

Walt Wiltschek

Searching for the right words. *General Board member Christy Waltersdorff records descriptive phrases other board members offered in an attempt to arrive at a "vision" statement.*

arated Brethren" there.

He and Shantilal Bhagat, staff consultant for Global Mission Partnerships, provided background on the situation, including an August visit to India that sought, unsuccessfully, to bring the two parties together for joint meetings and conversation.

Both groups are rooted in Church of the Brethren mission that began in India in 1895. After a 1970 decision to unite with other mission churches to form the Church of North India, a segment of the Brethren broke away from CNI again in1978 and has existed separately ever since, resulting in ongoing tensions and litigation.

Several Indian Brethren from the Naperville (Ill.) Church of the Brethren also shared their perspective on the issue.

After the report and some discussion, the board approved a proposal to appoint a committee that would "continue the conversation about recognition" with the Brethren in India, visit churches there, and look at reporting back to the board with a "possible proposal for recognition of the Indian church" at the 2001 Annual Conference.

Committee to write General Board vision statement

The General Board looked at its own work as it took up consideration of a board vision statement, which hasn't existed previously. Executive director Judy Mills Reimer said it should be a "shared statement of ... what the General Board is about."

Board members pondered a collection of phrases gathered by the Executive Committee and assembled by General Board Leadership Team members, naming the images those phrases brought to mind and images of the church that weren't represented in the phrases.

After discussion, the board appointed a committee of five people, representing both board members and staff, to prepare a vision statement through discernment. The committee will report back at the March 2000 meeting.

In other business, the board:

- appointed a committee to name ways that the Global Mission Partnerships office can work with Annual Conference officers to provide enhanced hospitality and visibility for "fraternal visitors" to Conference. The committee will consist of Don Booz, Merle Crouse, Jill Best, General Board staff Merv Keeney, and Annual Conference moderator Emily Mumma, and will report back to the General Board meeting in March.
- underscored the Ecumenical Decade to Overcome Violence, developed by the World Council of Churches Central Committee for the period of 2001-2010, with urgings that Church of the Brethren members and congregations respond with their own thoughts, ideas, and resources.
- affirmed a program from the National Council of Churches called "Pillars of Peace for the 21st Century," which calls for full US participation in the United Nations and other peacemaking steps.
- approved its 2000 budget amid reports of increased giving to the denomination and projections of another year finishing in the black.

Church provides child care to families of air crash victims

The crash of Egypt Air flight 990 in late October brought quick response from the General Board's Emergency Response/Service Ministries. ER/SM's CAIR team was activated Nov. 1 by the National Transportation Safety Board and American Red Cross and will be providing child care in Rhode Island to family and friends of victims of the disaster.

ER/SM staff member Lydia Walker served as administrator of the CAIR team, which also included Church of the Brethren member Sharon Gilbert of Fullerton, Calif., and several caregivers from other denominations.

ER/SM also continued its response to the hurricane devastation in North Carolina. The Disaster Child Care program at five American Red Cross Service Centers there had cared for more than 1,700 children through Oct. 21.

The Church of the Brethren's Emergency Response/Service Ministries set up disaster child care centers in Tarboro, Greenville, New Bern, and Goldboro in response to requests.

Four centers were still operating in October, with nearly 1,000 children cared for by 27 child-care providers thru Oct. 10, two and a half weeks after the project opened. Jean Myers and then Glen Erps were coordinating that effort locally.

That project was expected to close Nov. 6 after a month and a half of operation. Articles on the project have appeared in several local newspapers and TV newscasts. ER/SM is also involved with clean-up and rebuilding efforts.

The Virlina District congregations have raised more than $60,000 toward work in the region through a special disaster offering.

ER/SM's cleanup efforts, meanwhile, focused on needs in and around Franklin, Va., with volunteers coming primarily from the Virlina and Shenandoah districts. Long-term recovery efforts focused on Tarboro, N.C., but waters that were slow to recede delayed that effort.

In addition to the Hurricane Floyd relief, ER/SM had fall projects operating in Haysville, Kan.; Biloxi, Miss.; drought relief for farmers in the Mid-Atlantic states through Family Farm Drought Response; and the Dominican Republic.

Washington Office works for nuclear test ban treaty

The Church of the Brethren Washington Office continued to work for ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty for nuclear non-proliferation as it came before Congress in October, urging Brethren to contact their senators and writing a letter to all senators that went out in a Capitol Hill mailing.

Washington Office staff member Pam Genise also attended an event related to the treaty at the White House and a peace action demonstration at the Capitol.

The treaty failed to gain the two-thirds majority needed for approval in a vote, however, meaning that, at least for now, the US will not be joining numerous other nations around the world in ratifying the pact.

According to news reports, the White House has promised continued efforts to have the treaty ratified. General secretary Joan Brown Campbell of the National Council of Churches has called ratification of the treaty "an essential and historic step."

For more information on the CTBT, call the Washington Office at (202) 546-3202.

NCCUSA celebrates 50th anniversary in Cleveland

The National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA observed 50 years of ecumenical effort with a celebration Nov. 9-12 in Cleveland.

More than 1,000 participants were expected, including about two dozen from the Church of the Brethren. Six of those, including General Board executive director Judy Mills Reimer, Global Mission Partnerships director Merv Keeney, and General Board chair Mary Jo Flory-Steury, served as delegates.

A highlight of the event included an address by Ambassador Andrew Young, who was installed as the 20th president of the NCC.

"The Great Conversation" invited all present to share visions and dreams for ecumenism in the 21st century, and a host of forums presented closer exploration of a variety of topics. The week included a Jubilee CROP Walk to raise awareness of world hunger.

The General Assembly of the NCC, its highest legislative authority, also met during the celebration, and was expected "to approve policies urging priority support for public education, defining approaches to interfaith relations, and proposing 'pillars of peace for the 21st century,' including support for the United Nations," according to a release.

For additional information on the celebration, visit the NCC's web site at www.ncccusa.org.

Brethren work with coalition to abolish the death penalty

Church of the Brethren members were among those who attended the 19th annual meeting of the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, held in Philadelphia Oct. 1-3.

Workshops were held on various aspects of working to abolish the death penalty, and more than 100 people participated in a rally protesting the work of Lynn Abraham, Philadelphia's district attorney, whose office has generated a disproportionately high number of death sentences in Pennsylvania.

Keynote speakers at the conference included David Kazcynski, brother of "unabomber" Ted Kazcynski, and Christoph Arnold, spiritual leader of the Bruderhof communities.

A Church of the Brethren representative was invited to serve on the Advisory Council of Religious Organizing Against the Death Penalty. Death Row Support Project coordinator Rachel Gross of North Liberty, Ind., is also working with ROADP to encourage people to write to those on death row as a way of becoming involved with the death penalty issue. The Death Row Support Project is supported by the Church of the Brethren General Board's Brethren Witness office.

Brad Hartenstein

Dedicating the new Mutual Aid Association *office addition—Rich Hanley, executive minister for the Western Plains District, leads the October dedication service for MAA's 8,200-square-foot addition to its headquarters building in Abilene, Kan. Looking on are MAA board members and staff, wearing shirts with the Mutual Aid monogram.*

Physician faces court martial for conscientious objection

Shalom Fellowship Church of the Brethren of Durham, N.C., has become the spiritual home for a man seeking discharge from the United States Air Force on the grounds of his conscientious objection to war. Brethren from around the denomination have also rallied in support of Dr. Dennis Lipton who, with his wife Melissa, began relating to Shalom earlier this fall after declaring his conscientious objection.

Upon determining that he could not in good conscience follow through on his commitment to the military, Lipton borrowed money to repay the $63,000 the Air Force had invested in his education. After initially accepting the offer, his superiors eventually turned it down. As a result, Lipton faced a court martial trial in mid-November, with a possible 12-year prison term if convicted. The Air Force has never approved a conscientious objector claim by a physician under its command, although the right of conscientious objection is protected by US law.

"Dennis and Melissa Lipton have in many ways helped us at Shalom to grow closer to the true meaning of our name," said Phil Jones, pastor at Shalom. "Dennis searched us out, having heard of the denomination's pacifist heritage. Not only did he search us out and embrace us, but he also has challenged us. As Dennis has shared his story with us, we have been reminded here at Shalom of what our witness is, and what it can truly be through such strength of conviction."

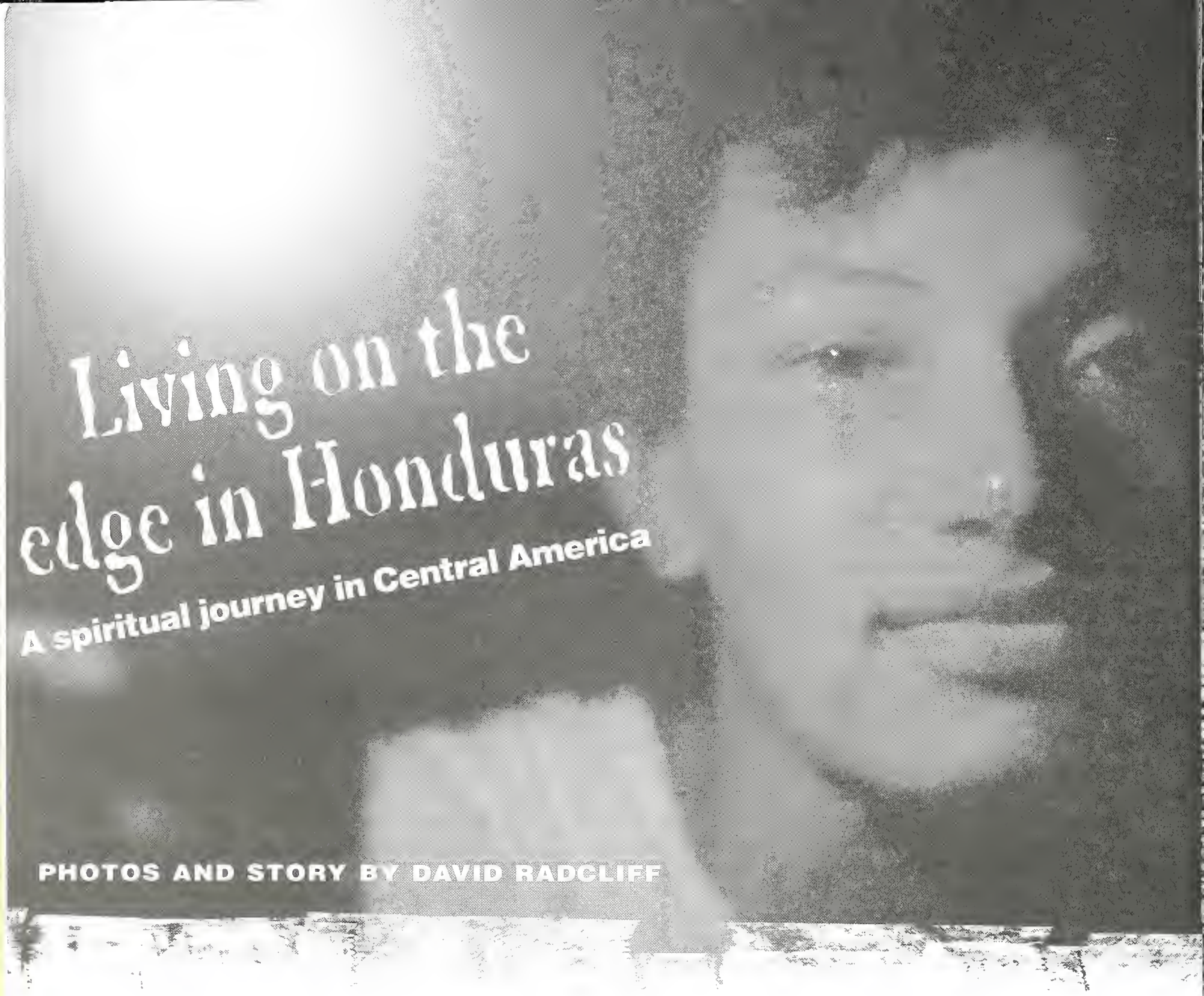
Church of the Brethren members can support Dennis and Melissa Lipton during their ordeal. Prayers and other spiritual support are appreciated. Letters can be written to members of Congress concerning the case, and especially to Armed Services Committee chairmen John Warner (US Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510) and Floyd Spence (US House of Representatives, 20515). The General Board has established a legal defense fund for Lipton, as his expenses may exceed $30,000. Contributions can be sent to the Church of the Brethren General Board, clearly marked for Dennis Lipton.

For more information on the status of the Lipton case, consult the Church of the Brethren Newsline, the General Board's Brethren Witness office or the Website established by the Shalom Church of the Brethren for this case. The address is: www.ipass.net/~shalomcob/lipton.html .

Living on the edge in Honduras

A spiritual journey in Central America

PHOTOS AND STORY BY DAVID RADCLIFF



A single oil-fueled candle illuminates the night-time darkness in the home of Rosa Maria Martinez Lindo, leader of the women's group in El Estribo.

Since my first visit in 1986, Honduras has served as a spiritual way station for me. That first trip was my first visit to an underdeveloped country, and thus the first time I had looked in the eye of poverty and its companions—child labor, infant mortality, chronic malnutrition. Having been raised on a diet of service and peace, I tasted the bitter fruit of injustice and began to read the Bible and see Christian faith in a new light. But I also met for the first time people who were able to believe in God and live by faith in spite of circumstances that might easily drive one to despair.

These experiences have been my stations of the cross, steps along my pilgrimage of faith.

Each successive visit brings back a rush of memories, and adds more to the storehouse. Some things don't change from trip to trip: the pull-back-hard-on-the-reins landing at the airport, the ride out of the capital past ramshackle hillside houses, the roadside menagerie of buyers and sellers and burros with burdens, the arrival at the mountainside retreat center—where our Brethren group poured the foundations in 1988.

Yet there are always new experiences: the wonder of a rain forest visit along the Miskito Coast—and the dugout canoe trip to get there; the village where ours were the first white faces some had seen; Lenca Indians telling stories by lantern light of their bravery in reclaiming ancestral lands. And particular children who even now evoke memories when the slide bearing their face is held up to the light. These experiences have been my stations of the cross, steps along my pilgrimage of faith.

I've been other places where I've seen the nexus of extraordinary faith and extraordinary suffering, but perhaps because of my regular trips to Honduras it's been there that I've gained a better understanding of the way of the cross, of suffering that one can only hope will be redemptive. People working from before dawn till dusk, and even then eking out less than a living for their families. Mothers worrying over sickly children, with no doctor in sight and no money if there was one. Children mustering glowing smiles for visitors, when their own future is dimmed by an educational path that most often deadends after the sixth grade.

But it is also here that I and others have encountered the resilience of lives that by necessity rely on faith. As in any society, not all Hondurans are saintly by any stretch of the imagination. Yet, many visitors find that there is a quality of life and faith shown by those in such a circumstance that is reminiscent of a faith we sometimes feel we left behind in our rush toward today. Perhaps there is something about life lived closer to the edge—of the river, of the street, of survival—that draws one both closer to God and to one's neighbors. We rarely walk down any street anymore, much less find ourselves welcomed inside to recline in the hammock of a neighbor who has little else to offer.

Each visit to Honduras has been hosted by our partner organization, the Christian Commission for Development. This Honduran relief and development organization boldly goes where few aid agencies—and certainly not the government—have gone before. In isolated mountainous communities, along the steamy coast, amid rain forest communities insulated from the outside world—CCD offers nutrition programs, agricultural training, women's empowerment, pastoral training, and community organizing. These are the tools necessary for communities to take another step up the ladder to the full life that God intends, and CCD offers them in over 400 villages across the country. The General Board supports CCD through grants from the Global Mission Partnerships office.

In the past year, CCD has expanded its reach due to the needs brought on by Hurricane Mitch. For the first time, they have begun intentional work in housing construction. After all, Mitch washed away or otherwise destroyed 70,000 housing units in four days of deluge. Add this to an antediluvian housing shortage of 700,000 units, and the need becomes apparent.

It was as part of this housing reconstruction effort that two Brethren teams visited Honduras in August. Sponsored by the General Board's Global Mission Partnerships and Brethren Witness offices, the teams totaled 35 members in all, ranging in age from 15 to 74 and in geography from coast to coast. The groups lived and worked in the southern Honduras community of El Estribo in the department of Nacaome—popularly known as the last bus stop on the way to that very hot place where none of us hope to end up.

As with all such experiences, this one was at least as much about building relationships as building houses. Certainly, we worked with community residents to make substantial progress on 20 houses being rebuilt for single mothers and widows in the community. And by the time of the second team's departure, walls of homemade cinder block had crept up several rows high on a number of houses.

Other walls had come tumbling down. From the moment of arrival, group members entertained community children with games, songs, and an impromptu beauty salon. The children returned the favor by teaching us their games and offering introductory Spanish language lessons—and pro-

The language of friendship is spoken here. Bruce Butler (Easton, Md.) and his young friend count with their fingers while learning how to say it in each other's language.

viding a ready audience for everything we did every moment of the day. We worked side by side with adults and children from the community from early morning until the very predictable torrential rains each afternoon. We learned their construction practices; they picked up a thing or two from our experienced block layers.

As time went along, we began to realize that rebuilding houses was but one piece of the puzzle in this community's struggle to put their lives back together—or even survive. During briefings on our arrival in the capital, we had learned that repayment of international debt (Honduras pays $1.7 million a day to creditors) requires 21 percent of the national budget, sapping funds badly needed for social programs. Indeed, nearly four times as much is spent on debt service as on health care—this in a nation where an estimated 12,000 children (of a total population of 6 million) die each year from preventable illnesses. International aid comes nowhere close to making up for the outflow of money; for every $1 in aid, Honduras pays out nearly $6 in debt repayment.

These international realities affect even isolated El

For most of the children in El Estribo sixth grade marks
week to travel to a nearby community for the next level of school

Estribo. People there could benefit greatly from a small amount of outside assistance, as most of the community is numbered among the 47 percent of Hondurans whose average income is less than $1 a day. Even a full day's work in the fields nearby—when it is available—brings in only slightly more than two dollars. Due to inflation in part caused by precious dollars being spent for debt repayment, the price of agricultural inputs such as seed and fertilizer has risen—raising the price of essential commodities like beans and rice. For a family in El Estribo to buy enough beans and rice for a day can require nearly two dollars, leaving no room for luxuries such as cheese or butter, not to mention health care or education.

The importance of getting an education was stressed by nearly every parent we talked to, but nearly everyone also lamented that their own children would likely not be in school beyond the sixth grade. The gains of even a secondary education would be substantial. Children would have a chance of finding work other than in the fields or cooking for a neighbor. With better jobs, there is improvement in their own lives, the health and nutrition of their children, and even the lives of their extended families.

Research has also shown that for young women, their educational level and the number of children they bear has an inverse relationship—the more of the former, the less of the latter. And women who have an education and

ne road for their education. It would cost several dollars a eyond the reach of their families.

Lisa Croushorn (Nokesville, Va.) shares a simple gift with a young girl. Just as important as the flowers are a few moments of attention—a gift desired by children of every culture

thus the chance for a better job are not forced by economics to stay in an abusive marital relationship—all too common in Honduras as elsewhere.

So you can begin to see the conundrum. Lack of education leads to poorly paying jobs, and for women, usually more children. With more mouths to feed and inadequate income, the first things to go are nutrition, health care, and education. And the beat goes on.

Here's how the cycle works for Rosa Maria Martinez Lindo. Rosa is a 30-year-old mother of six. Her education ended after the fourth grade; until then, she attended a school with no seats or desks, with an old door as a chalkboard. She has lived in El Estribo most of her life, although her family lived and worked for a while in nearby Nicaragua when she was a younger—until the US-sponsored contra war sent them fleeing back to Honduras.

Because of her own lack of education, Rosa's work options have been limited. Sometimes she herds cattle for a wealthy neighbor. The rate is 10 lempiras for seven hours of work—about nine cents an hour. Most recently, there was doing laundry for her better-off neighbors; the pay was 30 cents for 12 pieces of clothing hand-washed down by the river a half mile away. But since Hurricane Mitch even that work has dried up, as the storm caused enough economic damage to erase the margin that allowed some to pay others to do their laundry. And Mitch also claimed all but one of her 30 laying hens.

She deeply desires things for her children that she has not had. Most of all, she wants them to get the education necessary to give them options not available to her. Yet she knows this is improbable if not impossible. "When my children are older, they, too, will have to struggle. Work in the fields will be all they can expect," she lamented.

Rosa is an extremely capable woman. She is a leader in the community. She is articulate, intelligent, hard-working, with a sense of humor and a deep Christian faith. Yet her life is best summed up as she said it herself in a late-night conversation, "Right now, I am suffering with my children."

Sin is defined differently by different quarters of Christ's church. Along with whatever else Brethren may put under this heading, I have a feeling that we would list the conditions that lead Rosa Maria Martinez Lindo—and millions more like her—to live far short of their potential and a long way from what God hopes for each of us. I think we think it is a sin because we are convinced that God wants something else for humankind, and "not in some heaven, light years away" as the hymn puts it, but here on this earth in our time. And we think this because we see Jesus' great discomfort with injustice and his stirring compassion for those along the margins of human society.

As noted in the article below, our denomination is reaching out to Rosa and her community. In some small way we hope to walk with them toward the fuller life God intends for all of us.

For myself, I wonder what else God expects of me and of us as we encounter God's children in the many forgotten corners of the world. We find them there living less like fully-endowed members of the human family and more like refugees—not just from the latest flood or famine or economic policy, but from the community of compassion and justice where God hopes all of us will abide.

How do we figure out what God expects of us? We read the scriptures like Brethren always have—like they were written to us and are showing us how to live. We keep going to the places and meeting the people who are at the heart of God's concern but at the edge of ours. And then we trust that the way will be revealed to us.

See you in Honduras—or wherever we end up on our trek to the edges of God's earth, and to the center of God's love for all humankind.

David Radcliff is director of Brethren Witness for the Church o the Brethren General Board.

How Brethren are helping

"Now, whenever it rains hard it strikes fear in your heart, because you think it could be another Mitch."

This was the sentiment expressed by Rosa Maria Martinez Lindo as she told about the effect of Hurricane Mitch on El Estribo. Back in November 1998, what began like any other "winter" storm along the southern coast of Honduras soon became a relentless deluge. At some points, the rain fell at a rate of four inches per hour. On the third day, at two in the morning, houses started falling. Two days later, the news came that the worst part of the storm was closing in on them. Frightened, they abandoned ship, heading for a village several miles away. Some went by bus; Rosa carried three of her children the entire distance.

The effects of Mitch were many. In the short term, there was no way to get grain; even if one had money, there was nowhere to buy it. For those whose homes washed away, all their possessions were gone. Most of the community's small livestock was lost, some swept away in the flood waters and some perishing by becoming stuck in the mud the waters left behind. The whole community suffered from the erosion and siltification of their fields. And Mitch followed on the El Niño effect the year before, so that there have been two disastrous growing seasons in a row.

Our group was amazed to hear that following the storm, the folks from El Estribo had received medical care from—and had very nice things to say about—our own Church of the Brethren emergency medical team when this group of doctors made a brief stop in their region.

Church of the Brethren relief to Honduras came primarily through the Emergency Disaster Fund, with smaller grants from the Global Food Crisis Fund.

A new Global Food Crisis Fund grant is providing $5,000 to the women of El Estribo to purchase pigs and chickens for food and for profit—and for the sense of self-affirmation that comes from having productive work. The project is a joint effort of the women and the Christian Commission for Development. If the effort is a success, grants to neighboring communities will be considered.

Another Brethren rebuilding team will be heading for Honduras June 17-27, 2000. The group will again work in the southern part of the country, and will visit El Estribo to see the livestock project and visit community members. The team is being coordinated by the Brethren Witness office in cooperation with the Global Mission Partnerships office. Call 800-323-8039, ext. 228, for more information.

The Church of the Brethren is also adding its voice to the Jubilee 2000 Campaign, an international movement spurred by Christians to seek debt relief for the world's poorest nations. A March 1999 General Board resolution supporting this effort—and naming Honduras and Nicaragua specifically—was followed by a church-wide petition campaign coordinated by the Washington Office.—DAVID RADCLIFF

Take a faith expedition

To find God, venture off the beaten path

BY DAVID RADCLIFF

When we think "resources," we usually think of ink on paper or gadgets in a box or perhaps a person with special information to share. In general, anything or anyone that helps us accomplish a particular goal could be understood as a resource to us in that situation. When speaking of the higher goals of Christian discipleship, a resource might be any person, thing, or experience that enables us to clarify our sense of God's call or invites us into closer and more loving relationships with our neighbors.

If you will allow this wider usage of the term, then I would like to add another category to our usual list of resources. Every year, the General Board and other Brethren agencies invite people to participate in workcamps and learning tours to many parts of our nation and world. While often there is a specific and tangible objective for these trips—such as rebuilding after a hurricane or learning about peace and justice issues—the real value of such experiences is in the opportunity they offer for faith development. Sure, we'll lay some block or learn some lessons, but if we don't also lay a better foundation for our faith or learn something about Christian community, then we haven't taken full advantage of the visit.

The reasons these experiences can provide this kind of faith development are several. First, we find ourselves "out of our element" and away from our comfortable routines. This throws us just enough off balance that we are open to new thoughts and feelings and perceptions. We're also suddenly in a new community, as the people we visit and often our traveling companions as well were previously unknown to us. This stretches and broadens our sense of Christian community. And at least for a moment we've experienced life as it is lived by someone whose journey has not been easy, yet who may have maintained a remarkably resilient faith even so.

Jesus regularly sought such experiences, whether venturing into the wilderness to pray or venturing into the lives of marginalized people to offer hope and healing. These forays were part of what kept him attuned to God's presence and his neighbors' need—and renewed him in the process. I often think of his comment to his disciples as they offered him lunch following his challenging encounter with the Samaritan woman: "I have food to eat that you do not know about." Sack lunch? No, the satisfaction of having gone beyond accepted boundaries to offer the gift of God's love.

If our eyes and hearts are open to it, these experiences can be a rich resource for us as well, revitalizing our faith and reconnecting us with neighbors near and far. Let me state it more boldly. I believe as Christians, we must find ways to venture off the beaten path in our attempts to be more present to God and to our neighbors. This doesn't mean that all of us have to catch the next plane to the Dominican Republic or to North Korea. There are plenty of places in our own neighborhoods and nation where we can be thrown off balance, invited into new relationships, and shown another side of life.

In the Brethren Witness office, we've begun to call the trips we offer "Faith Expeditions," since that's our real purpose. This year, in cooperation with other General Board programs, we'll invite people along to visit returned refugees in Guatemala (March 1-10), explore justice concerns in the Dominican Republic (April 26-May 4), rebuild after Mitch and visit a Global Food Crisis Fund project in Honduras (June 17-27) and learn about the rain forest ecosystem in Belize (Jan. 7–14, 2001). Other offices will take you to Nigeria, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Mexico, St. Croix, and the Dominican Republic—and all across the United States.

Give us a call at the Brethren Witness office, 800-323-8039. This may not be your typical resource box, but it may just help you get where you want to go.

David Radcliff is director of Brethren Witness.

Washing the feet of their neighbors

Ludovic St. Fleur, *pastor of Eglise des Freres Haitiens.*

The Miami Haitian church gives as good as it gets

STORY BY MELODY YEAZELL
PHOTOS BY WAYNE SUTTON

When Ludovic St. Fleur left his homeland of Haiti in 1979, he, like many of his fellow immigrants, was willing to risk his life for the prospect of a better future in America. With 51 other Haitians, Ludovic made a two-week journey by boat to America with little more than the clothes he was wearing. Upon arrival in south Florida, he and his companions were immediately picked up by immigration authorities and placed in jail for more than 11 days.

This rough entry to America is common for many who flee their native Haiti, which is riddled with poverty, sickness, and occult religious practices. Illiteracy is widespread because few can afford proper education. African voodoo rituals are still widely practiced throughout Haiti. It is no surprise that many Haitians are in search of a better life.

Despite the public acceptance of voodoo, many Haitians have turned to Christianity as an expression of their faith. When Ludovic was a teenager, his brother came to accept

Christ as savior, and in response, Ludovic, too, made the step to become a Christian. This led to Ludovic's participation at a Baptist church on the island throughout his young adult years. There he grew in faith and eventually taught Sunday school classes. By the time he came to America, he had a zeal for God and for evangelism.

His arrival in Florida led him to the Church of the Brethren, where he quickly became involved in leadership with the newly started Miami Haitian congregation. Set in tropical south Florida, the Eglise des Freres Haitiens, or Miami Haitian Church of the Brethren, was conceived in the late 1970s when the Church of the Brethren was working at the refugee center in Miami.

Currently the fastest growing congregation in the Atlantic Southeast District, the Miami Haitian church launched its humble beginnings in a warehouse with fewer than 10 participants. Pastoral responsibilities initially shifted hands before Ludovic St. Fleur was ordained and brought forth to lead the congregation. He served as part-time pastor until this year when he officially became full time.

The same determination and zeal he exhibited when leaving his home nation have been continued in his work at the church. Due to rapid growth in the number of parishioners, the present church facility was purchased in 1996. This building has been utilized in all areas of ministry for all ages of the Haitian community.

An enormous amount of "elbow grease" has gone into fixing up the premises and the grounds. Yet, as with any building, there are always areas needing attention and improvement. Blessed with hard laborers from their community, the Miami Haitian church also has had an outpouring of volunteer helpers from the district and from the denomination at large. Many individuals have made trips to the church to offer their skills and to work alongside the church community.

Those who have visited the Miami Haitian Church of the Brethren always comment on the warmth and vitality of the parishioners. This community consists of a people interested in receiving from God, but also giving back abundantly what they are able to give within their means. Jesus is their primary example as they serve to give God glory.

Following in the steps of the larger Church of the Brethren, the Eglise des Freres Haitiens people have a heart for peace and love. There is a tremendous thrust to do outreach in the Miami community by providing a food bank, services to the poor, and refugee services that help integrate new immigrants to the area. In order to help those in need, Ludovic and his wife, Elizabette, have had people living with them from time to time. This year they took in two teenagers who had been disowned by their parents.

Ministry on the radio has also become a regular and impressive form of outreach for this Miami congregation. Every Thursday night for one hour, members of the church, with Pastor Ludovic, air a live program offering prayer to any listener who has needs. Haitians from all over Miami phone to share their problems and requests. Topics ranging from marital strife and physical illness to runaway children are discussed with the phone volunteers who serve as the on-call prayer-givers for the evening. These volunteers spend time listening, reading from the Bible, and praying through the problem with the callers. But the personal ministry does not end when the phone call is finished. The church volunteers continue to phone their callers at home and pray with them until some form of breakthrough occurs in the recipient's circumstances. There is a dedication to see effective answered prayer.

Miami Haitian Church of the Brethren *members have been active in serving Brethren in the Dominican Republic. Here Ecclesiaste Frederic, of the Miami Haitian church, lays block on a church's new outhouse at San José, Dominican Republic.*

What is it like to worship at Miami Haitian Church of the Brethren? Unless the visitor is fluent in French or Creole, there might be a slight impediment to understanding the content of the service that is preached in the native languages of

Haiti. However, the large numbers in attendance, the expressions of the people, the fire in Pastor Ludovic's preaching, and the Haitian worship music speak volumes regarding the congregation's love of praising God and learning His word.

The influx of people attending various services offered on Sundays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays is quite large. It is not uncommon to see the sanctuary filled to overflowing — a result of the Haitians' tremendous and genuine spiritual hunger.

Eight of the parishioners have gone on to study in the Three-Year Reading Course offered by the denomination, because they have the desire to serve as lay leaders and evangelists in Miami, as well as in Haiti. Large numbers of those who attend are being baptized. At a baptism on Easter Sunday, 10 people were immersed in the Atlantic Ocean at sunrise.

On an Easter weekend visit, John Huggett, chair of the church development council of the Atlantic Southeast District, participated in services and activities at Eglise des Freres Haitiens. During his visit, the church held a love feast and feetwashing service. He was touched deeply to see the celebration so common in the Church of the Brethren being enacted so tenderly among the Haitian people. Young and old attended the event. The buildings vibrated with the lilting, a cappella melodies of Haitian worshippers as they knelt before each other with basin and towel.

Following the service, Huggett was struck by the poignant reaction of a fourteen-year-old parishioner, an American-born Haitian named Daniel. When asked about his previous attendance, Daniel said he had known of the services for many

The Miami Haitian *church hosted the Atlantic Southeast District Conference this year. The building was acquired in 1996.*

Miami Haitian church needs loan

The Miami Haitian Church of the Brethren is located next to the middle-class neighborhood of Miami Shores and a few miles from the glitzy Miami Beach area. The congregation, with the help of the Atlantic Southeast District and many private donors throughout the denomination, including several congregations, purchased their church buildings and parsonage in January. 1996, for $750,000. The property was appraised at that time for $900,000. Through payments and gifts, the amount remaining on the initial debt has been reduced to less than $353,000 in just over three years.

The building itself has been upgraded substantially. But, the only financing available at the time was a five-year balloon note with the owner. That note is due in January of 2001. Even though no payments have been late, the owner is unwilling to renew the note. Commercial lenders would only provide a loan for no more than seven years and with undesirable terms.

The Church Development Council of the Atlantic Southeast District and the Miami Haitian church are seeking funding for the remainder of the loan. The Church of the Brethren General Board no longer makes loans to cover mortgages for church buildings or property. If you are interested in furthering the mission of this congregation by contributing to the loan reduction, or have interest in providing a secured loan at reasonable interest rates, please contact the Atlantic Southeast District Office, 2037 Hempel Ave., P.O. Box 25, Gotha, FL 34734-0025. Telephone: 407-578-8458.—John Huggett

Worship is spirited and genuine; *visitors are treated warmly. There are services on four days of the week.*

Rosalyn Cadette and Brittany *after a Sunday evening worship service in October.*

Sunday evening worship *includes a time for church members to bring testimony and song.*

years, but decided he needed to experience one for himself. Hesitant at first to participate because he feared foot fungus from those to whom he would minister, Daniel found the initial prospect of feet-washing less than appealing. But, despite his anxiety, he participated with the men of the congregation. As a result, he responded, "I felt very proud because my brothers and I came together just as Jesus and his disciples came together. I felt a lot of love in the room, because people did not care what was wrong with each other's feet. There were some people with wounds — we were careful not to hurt the wounds — but we washed the feet anyway. If Jesus, our savior, would wash the feet of his disciples, we should be able to wash the feet of each other. We should not be ashamed to do it."

Daniel's statement, along with the living witness of Ludovic St. Fleur, exemplifies the ministry present at Eglise des Freres Haitiens. This is a community of people who are economically poor, yet rich in faithfulness. They are willing to serve their community and "wash the feet" of their neighbors with God's love and acts of Christian assistance.

Melody Yeazell, of Orlando, Fla., is a member of New Covenant Church of the Brethren. She became acquainted with the Miami Haitian Church and its ongoing needs during the past year when she served as secretary for the Atlantic Southeast District. Melody currently is doing some freelance writing.

Brethrening

The rest of me

The surgeon walked briskly into the room where I was perched on the examining table and said abruptly, "We do have cancer."

And so it was that I was scheduled for a mastectomy on Monday, Feb. 19, 1990. As the time for the operation drew closer, I began feeling sorry for myself. At about 4 a.m. on Saturday the 17th, I awoke feeling very depressed and tearful. I headed for the kitchen so that my sobs wouldn't awaken my husband.

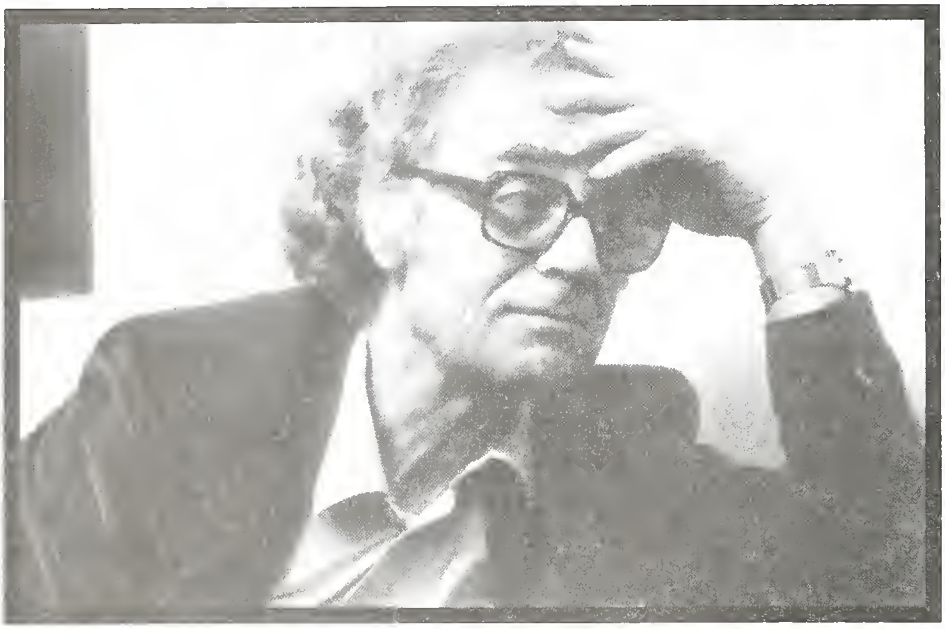
As I cried, I sensed that God sent me a message. When one has a pear, peach, or apple, and finds in it a rotten spot, one removes the spot but the rest of the fruit is useful for whatever it was intended. I had a rotten spot that needed to be removed, but "the rest of me" was just fine. After that thought came, I had a sense of peace about what I was facing. It wasn't long before I felt the comfort of my husband's arms around me.

One week after the surgery, my mother died at age 94. I was so involved in making arrangements for her funeral and taking care of her estate that I didn't have time to think about myself. I've always felt that the timing of her death was a blessing for me, one final way in which she supported me by diverting my attention from myself.

Nine years have passed since my mastectomy. During that time, I have shared with doctors, nurses, and others facing the same surgery, the message that God gave to me that Saturday night before the operation. I am still leading a very active life as wife, mother, grandmother, teacher, church organist, and family bookkeeper.

The "rest of me" is just fine.—HAZEL B. GUYER

Hazel B. Guyer lives in Waynesboro, Pa.



Martin Me[illegible] [illegible]tsche[illegible] für die Hoffn[illegible]

Blessed unrest

The remarkable life and witness of Hans de Boe

BY DALE W. BROWN

Recently we hosted a troublesome saint in our home. It was the third time in several decades that he invited himself. Hans A. de Boer visited us in Elizabethtown, Pa., on a US tour that included Elizabethtown College, Manchester College, Bethany Seminary, and the General Offices in Elgin, Ill. His life story is more fascinating than fiction.

Hans was raised in Germany in a mansion with servants. His father was an industrialist and freemason. Members of this secret fraternity were tormented by Hitler's henchmen, along with Jews, homosexuals, gypsies, and others. The family business was closed and Hans was forced into the German army. Since he could not kill Hitler, he resolved to do damage by putting sugar in military tanks. He was caught and lingered in prison until the arrival of American forces.

After the troops came the do-gooders. Hans met Brethren Wilbur Mullen, a Mennonite and a Quaker. When with us, Hans gives Brethren and Mennonites major credit for his conversion to Christ. The de Boer family had identified Christianity with the Nazis. Over 95 percent of Christians, including free churches such as German Mennonites, supported Hitler. When he met Christians who serve others and name war as sin, Hans became enamored with the Sermon on the Mount and persons like Martin Luther King, Mohandas Gandhi, and Bishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa.

After the war, the converted son joined his father's mercantile business and was sent to South Africa. Discovering his father was making huge profits off the backs of persons wh did not have enough to feed their f ilies, he concluded it was not possi to be both a capitalist and a Christi He remains a socialist, but advocat socialism like Sweden's rather thar expression in the former East Germany and the former Soviet Union Because of major health problems resulting from torture and severe b ings, he is pleased with the German health system. He responded to a question about the size of governments by saying some nations need less. However, the US needs more government in order to provide heal care and education for all. And it needs to be freed from the control o corporations.

Hans de Boer remained in South Africa in order to identify with the people. He became a close friend to Gandhi's son through long discussions about apartheid and racism.

This led to a commitment to travel extensively in Asia. The trip lasted four years. The purpose was to discern possibilities of alleviating poverty in nations recently freed from colonialism. He wondered how Christians serve in these countries and how they relate to other religions.

In India he encountered both the cruel caste system and the nonvioler Gandhian tradition of Hinduism. Responding to an invitation to meet with the prime minister of India, the soon shared critical evaluations of Christian missions. Finally, Hans asked Nehru: "Which missionaries are the ones you value?" He named the Mennonites, the Quakers, and e Church of the Brethren because ey relate on a level with the people d are without racial prejudice. ince Brethren enjoy being affirmed, any of us discovered this compliment in the book *The Bridge Is Love*, e Boer's fascinating travel diary.

Everywhere he went, he lived with e common people. In Burma, Singapore, and communist China, he ought out Christians and holy members of other religions. His ventures vere punctuated with confrontive onversations. His interests were lictated by his zeal for peace and ustice.

In Japan Hans walked where he vas told not to walk and was overwhelmed with the destruction and suffering of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. He can vividly put you in touch with ghastly suffering and death. It was there that he became deeply concerned about the nuclear arms race. Japanese referred to Christian bombers because the plane that carried the first atomic bomb aimed at innocent civilians was launched with prayers of both a Protestant and a Catholic chaplain.

Home in Germany, Hans used vacations and leaves of absence from teaching teenagers so that he might pursue activities as a world citizen. A longer period related to the Vietnam War occurred in Cambodia. He had married an Indian surgeon and was assisting her in amputating limbs of suffering victims of war. American troops arrived, assumed they were communists, and tortured them. They killed his wife. He survived and left without their young son. Later the Pol Pot regime forced his son to be in their army. It was not long before he was one of thousands they beheaded. When Hans later returned to find his son, he refused their offer of his son's head.

Hans gravitates to witness where there is oppression, hatred, and violence. More recently this 74-year-old prophet traveled to Kosovo and helped alleviate the misery of many. Moreover, he was able to enter Yugoslavia because he had previously lectured there to apologize for the World War II bombing of their country by his country. He experienced and abhorred the American bombing as much as he did the atrocities of Milosevic. This trip followed his partial recovery from beatings by young Nazis at one of their gatherings. He is troubled by the revival of Nazism. He shared with Secretary of State Madeleine Albright a concern about Nazi literature that is produced in Nebraska and sent to Germany.

> When asked how he has coped with so much suffering, he was ready: "Apart from Jesus Christ and a sense of humor, I would have committed suicide many times."

In Germany, Hans is regarded as one of the best authorities on third world affairs. In addition to his lengthy residence in Africa and Asia, he has traveled extensively in South America. He seems to be omnipresent at memorable historic events. In one of his recent sessions with Elizabethtown College students, someone mentioned Woodstock. Hans joined in the discussion and revealed that he had been there. He has met most of the well-known presidents and rulers of the 20th century. He often is sent by humanitarian organizations to help others. Amnesty International sent him twice to Cuba to request the release of political prisoners. He talked Castro into freeing two.

As a Christian, his world citizenship also embodies ecumenism. During a lengthy residence in Canada, he studied theology at Protestant and Catholic institutions. In addition, he traveled to matriculate in classes taught by Mennonites. This explains his ordination by the United Church of Canada and his own Evangelical Church in Germany. I was surprised when this epitome of simplicity, who lives in an upper two-room apartment in a poor neighborhood, emerged from our guest room dressed neatly in a clerical garb.

When another student asked him to name the greatest persons he ever met, he responded quickly: "Jesus Christ and Dietrich Bonhoeffer." When asked how he has coped with so much suffering, he was ready: "Apart from Jesus Christ and a sense of humor, I would have committed suicide many times."

Hans de Boer is featured in a book entitled, *Unbeirrbar*, a large pictorial for a living room coffee table. The German word connotes those celebrities who are not known by the public, but are named as saintly celebrities in the kingdom of God. Hans appears with other selected entries such as Albert Schweitzer, Karl Barth, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Mother Teresa, Dorothee Sölle, Helen Keller, and other beloved saints.

In one of his books de Boer responds to concerns about his arrogant nature and stories that exude pessimism. The title of his autobiography, *Blessed Unrest*, refers to himself. He believes the way he loves his neighbors is to wake up those who are sleeping to do something about poverty, violence to others, and oppression of the disenfranchised. Though his recent US trip was sponsored by other churches, Hans spent much time with the Brethren, whom he loves. Instead of an intruding German, Hans de Boer is truly our soul brother, one who calls us to be who we are at our best.

Dale W. Brown, professor emeritus, Bethany Theological Seminary, lives in Elizabethtown, Pa.

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Carson Valley, Duncansville, Pa.
Chambersburg, Pa
Cherry Lane, Clearville, Pa
Chicago, Ill
Cloverdale, Va
Cocalico, Denver, Pa
Codorus, Loganville, Pa
Columbia Lakewood Community, Seatt Wash
Conestoga, Leola, Pa
Coventry, Pottstown, Pa.
Dallas Center, Iowa
Dayton, Va
Douglas Park, Chicago, Ill
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Eglise des Freres Haitiens, Miami, Fla
Elizabethtown, Pa.
Ellisforde, Tonasket, Wash.
English River, South English, Iowa
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We need to get back to our Pietist roots, making God's word central and allowing the work of the Holy Spirit to take place. . . .

Get back to Pietist roots

The October 1999 edition of the MESSENGER was a particularly good one. The tribute to Dale Aukerman graced the inside cover, a fitting tribute to a great man of God.

The spirituality section was excellent. Wallace Landes' piece on spiritual roots and Glenn Mitchell's article on spiritual direction both hit the nail directly on the head for the Church of the Brethren.

We need to get back to our Pietist roots, making God's word central and allowing the work of the Holy Spirit to take place one-on-one, in groups, as congregations, and as a church. If we don't, our church will continue to get lost in a sea of well-meaning tolerance, multi-culturalism, and worldly ways.

Lerry W. Fogle
Frederick Church of the Brethren
Frederick, Md.

Christ's caring family

I just finished reading the "Forum on the Name" in the October issue.

I came to the Church of the Brethren from the American Baptists. I was welcomed like a family member. I came with the background of a C.O., which was not well received by many ABC churches, and even my childhood church was disturbed by my decision. Yet I became ordained ABC pastor and served a home missionary. began an interim pastorate with Detroit First Church of the Brethren in 1977 and went on to rve the church, both as full-time d part-time pastor, until 1995. I s impressed by the family-like mosphere. I am now retired and eceive a small Church of the Brethren pension.

Since 1708 the Church of the Brethren has had a history of unity and equality but we have come through a sexist age, and many may not know our history. A name change could be of help. I have several suggestions. All focus on "Christ's family." They are: "Christ's continuing family," "Christ's caring family," Christ's committed family," "Christ's obedient family."

All of these allow for the chance to explore "Another way of living. Peacefully, simply, together."

Donald K. Flint
Sterling Heights, Mich.

Another look at Mary

Today's mail brought the October issue of *Theology Today*. Please suggest that every pastor and all other theologically literate workers within churches try to get a copy of it to see the many expressions about Mary. If the entire issue is studied widely in all Christian churches, I can see numerous possibilities.

Both Protestants and Catholics may have another look at Mary. It may help churches around the world to understand the roles available to both genders.

E. Paul Weaver
Everett, Pa.

Gifts that matter

There is still time to order from Brethren Press this Christmas.

Mon.–Fri. 8 am to 6 pm CST, Nov. 15–Dec. 21
Phone 800-441-3712 Fax 800-667-8188 e-mail brethren_press_gb@brethren.org

Brethren Press

Classified Ads

FOR RENT

Deer Lodge: a north woods retreat secluded home, sleeps 4; year-round recreation area; fall color; Ottawa National Forest ski trails out the back door; down-hill ski at nearby Powder Horn Mountain; North Country Trail passes in front; private tennis court; Finnish Log Cabin bunkhouse sleeps 5; walk to Lake Superior's pristine Black River Harbor, beaches, fishing, gorgeous waterfalls. Located 20 miles north of Ironwood, MI, far-western Upper Peninsula. Available September – June, starts $75. Reservations: Monica at 906-932-1898. Further info: Ikenberry 906-932-4299 or 316-241-3258 or gikenber@yahoo.com

FOR SALE:

The Highland Avenue Church of the Brethren Centennial Encyclopedia, edited by Jim Lehman. A unique church history, featuring 150 short, readable articles written by friends and members of the congregation plus 100 illustrations and numerous sidebars and quotations; includes lists of BVSers from Elgin and BVSers who have served in Elgin. A donation of $12 per copy, includes shipping and handling. Order from Highland Avenue Church of the Brethren, 783 West Highland Avenue, Elgin, IL 60123.

INVITATION

Yes, there is a Church of the Brethren in Jacksonville, Florida. And is nestled one mile south of I-10 (exit 55) between I-95 and I-295 -(between Cassat and Hamilton). Pastor Herb Weaver invites you to come and worship with us. Phone 904-384-3375.

POSITION AVAILABLE

Elizabethtown College announces an entry-level, tenure-track position in the Department of Religions Studies, beginning in August 2000, with primary specialization in the comparative study of religion. PhD required (ABDs considered); specialization in the religions of South or East Asia is preferred; demonstrated abilities in undergraduate teaching and scholarly research preferred. Additional correspondence in peace and conflict studies, women's studies, gender studies; philosophy; or religion and society is desirable. Responsibilities include teaching introductor courses in the general education program, developing advanced courses; and student advising. Ar understanding and appreciation of the Anabaptist anc Pietist faith traditions is desirable. Elizabethtown College, rated as one of the best northern liberal art institutions by *U.S News and World Report*, offers it 1,600 students 40 major programs in traditional liberal arts and professional fields. The Elizabethtowr motto, "Educate for Service," expresses the College' mission of linking the world of work with the worlc of the spirit to advance the values of peace, justice anc human dignity. Located in Pennsylvania's historic Lancaster County, Elizabethtown enjoys outstanding qualit of life and easy access to the major metropolitan area of Philadelphia, Washington and Baltimore.Review o applications will begin December 15, 1999. To apply send letter of application CV, and names and contac information of three current references to Nancy E Florey, Director of Human Resources, Elizabethtowr College, One Alpha Drive, Elizabethtown, PA 17022-2298, email: florey.ne@etown,edu. AA, EOE

TRAVEL

Travel with a purpose to: Eastern Europe and the "Passion Play," July 31 to August 14, 2000, with Wendel and Joan Bohrer. Visit Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Bratislava Krakow, Warsaw and much more. First Class tickets to the Passion Play, Folklore Show in Warsaw, Prague and Budapest A Danube River Cruise in Budapest. Buffet breakfast and dinner throughout. Contact the Bohrers by mail— 3651 US Hwy 27 S. #40, Sebring, FL 33870.0 Tel/Fax 941-382-9371. E-mail rdwboh@strato.net

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Bethany
Theological
Seminary

FACULTY OPENING

Bethany seeks applications for the newly created faculty position of **Director, Institute for Ministry with Youth and Young Adults**, beginning August 1, 2000. The Director will develop and administer the program of the Institute, which will include educational opportunities at both the graduate and Academy level. For a fuller description of responsibilities and qualifications, see "news" at www.brethren.org/Bethany.

Applicants should send letter of application and curriculum vitae, and request three references to submit letters of recommendation, to:

Academic Dean
Bethany Theological Seminary
615 National Road West
Richmond, IN 47374.

Deadline for applications:
December 31, 1999.

Coordinator of Washington Office

A full-time position based in Washington D.C. with a start date of February 2000. Interviews will begin after February 5, 2000, and continue until the position is filled.

For more information and application, contact:
Elsie Holderread at
800-323-8039 x 259 or e-mail
eholderread_gb@brethren.org

Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation

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Turning Points

New members

Cedar Creek, Garrett, Ind.: Andrea Graft

Glendora, Calif.: Mike Chatt, Julia Chatt, Scott Chatt, Kathleen Chatt, Christopher Bliss, Annie Marker, Jessica Marker, Vivian Vecchio, Patty Marker, Shari Newman, In Du Chae, Myung Chae

Greenmount, Harrisonburg, Va.: Glenn Brumfield, Scott Dove, Loree Horn, William Yates, Raymond and Doris Kiser, Charles and Phyllis Burgoyne

Hatfield, Pa.: Danielle Diaz, Matthew Diaz, Sarah Jones, Kelli Brindle, Frank Brown, Eileen Brown

ive Oak, Calif.: Randy White, Cassie Bryant, Carmen Christensen, Francis Christensen, Nicholas Dormois, Steven Hodges

Marilla, Copemish, Mich.: Jo Lynn Miller, Mark Newsom, Wayne Morris

ew Enterprise, Pa.: Earla M. Reffner

arsons, Kan.: Margaret Goodyear, Stepheny Warstler, Lyndy Hill

ine Creek, N. Liberty, Ind.: Ryan Flickinger, Diana Godfrey, Mildred Hunter, Amy Jagger, Tim Jagger, Niles Lamberson, Amanda Pearson, Barbara Pearson, Rachael Pearson, Ron Renz, David Replogle, Rebekah Replogle, Becky Trusty, Marcus Trusty, Richard Trusty, Jeannie Winnerstrom, Ashlie Wolff, Debbie Wolff, Mike Wolff, Mike Wolff Jr., Vickie Wolff

idge, Shippensburg, Pa.: Shandi Tosten, Rebekka and Katherine Linn, Ralph Deihl, Franz and Stella Schauer

an Diego, Calif.: Susan Sanner, Carol Hayden, John Davis

niontown, Pa.: Maxine Cavalcante, Courtney Kovalchick, Ashley Kovalchick, Mike McShane, Pam McShane, Brian Shaffer, Stephen Works, Nancy McShane

ion Hill, Columbiana, Ohio: Robert Bobby, Sarah Carson, Beverly Conkle, Kathryn Jean Conkle, Barb Reese

Wedding nniversaries

anwart, Harold and Lis, Avon Park, Fla., 55

urke, Ron and Jeanne, Sebring, Fla., 50

arr, Wayne and Jane, Sebring, Fla., 65

ingrich, Walt and Alice, Elizabethtown, Pa., 50

oover, Bill and Doris, Spring Grove, Fla., 60

nes, Kermit and Druscilla, Windber, Pa., 55

esselring, Charles and Lois, Sebring, Fla., 60

all, George and Betty, Sebring, Fla., 50

cKinnon, Neil and Marie, Modesto, Calif., 65

ogers, Charles and Grace, New Paris, Ind., 55

nnreuther, Bob and Char, Waterloo, Iowa, 50

hite, Jack and Martha, New Market, Md., 60

mmerman, Bud and Dottie, Sebring, Fla., 55

Deaths

Allman, Mary S., 85, Dayton, Va., July 21

Appleby, James Edwin III, 29, Mechanicsburg, Pa., June 2

Baker, Linden H., 77, Orkney Springs, Va., Aug. 7

Bender, Beverly Jean, 58, Overland Park, Kan., Oct. 4

Bible, Berlin, 65, Harrisonburg, Va., Aug. 30

Bishop, Janice, 64, Greenville, Ohio, Sept. 26

Bishop, Virginia, 89, Staunton, Va., Aug. 30

Blake, Edwin W., 77, La Porte, Ind., Sept. 20

Brant, Phyllis M., 71, Spring Grove, Pa., Sept. 19

Brubaker, George, Sr., 69, Rocky Mount, Va., Sept. 9

Brooks, Venora, 95, Wheatland, Mo., Sept. 22

Byerly, Helen R., 85, Lancaster, Pa., May 14

Cash, Alma F., 83, Harrisonburg, Va., Oct. 9

Clair, Charlotte, 72, Bridgewater, Va., Sept. 24

Clayton, Anna May, 92, Columbiana, Ohio, Oct. 14

Clinedinst, Helen N., 87, Edinburg, Va., Aug. 24

Coffman, Shirley J., 76, Timberville, Va., Aug. 28

Combs, Courtney, 79, Moorefield, W.Va., Aug. 11

Combs, Glen, 90, Baker, W.Va., Aug. 2

Combs, Glenn, 75, Stephens City, Va., Aug. 14

Cosner, Alfred R., 78, Mount Storm, W.Va., Aug. 21

Crawford, Irene, Troutville, Va., May 31

Crumpacker, Raymond, Roanoke, Va., July 29

Davidge, William M., 86, McGaheysville, Va., June 24

Dean, John R., 81, Harrisonburg, Va., June 12

Dennen, Frances, 81, Springfield, Mo., April 2

Diehl, Herman H., Jr., Mount Crawford, Va., Aug. 6

Fike, Alva, 97, Peace Valley, Mo, Aug. 11

Fike, Reath, 97, Peace Valley, Mo., Aug. 28

Filler, Mildred, Sebring, Fla., Sept. 11

Fitzwater, Elizabeth, 90, Bridgewater, Va., Aug. 4

Goode, Jacqueline Louise, Frederick, Md., Oct. 1

Goon, Dale E., 75, Fort Wayne, Ind., Oct. 12

Groff, Everett, 84, Sebring, Fla., Oct. 9

Grogg, Curtis E., 84, Brandywine, W.Va., Aug. 11

Hamman, Eva M., 87, New Market, Va., July 18

Hancock, Frank, Chalmette, La., June 17

Harden, Ruth G., 92, Bridgewater, Va., July 31

Hartman, Mable E., 80, Franklin, W.Va., Aug. 14

Hildreth, Lucille, 79, San Diego, Calif., Aug. 7

Hobbs, William, 79, McPherson, Kan., Oct. 13

Hodson, Albert, 68, Middletown, Va., Aug. 19

Hoff, Andrew J., 89, New Windsor, Md., July 9

Keller, Sheldon, 74, Timberville, Va., July 14

Kent, George, Troutville, Va., Aug. 6

Kimmel, Homer D. "Joe," 85, Olympia, Wash., April 10

Kohne, Mary E., 92, Mathias, W.Va., July 20

Lockard, Opal, Fincastle, Va., Jan. 21

Lowe, Leonard, Sebring, Fla., July 10

McDonald, Ivy, 82, Strasburg, Va., Aug. 2

McFarland, Shirley, Roanoke, Va., June 25

MacLeod, Louetta, 88, Woodstock, Va., July 28

Moyers, Lorraine S., 75, Singers Glen, Va., Aug. 25

Myers, Lillian M., 92, Bridgewater, Va., July 31

Ockerman, Betty, 61, Beaverton, Mich., Oct. 8

Parker, Alfred L., 60, Baker, W.Va., Aug. 6

Pettit, Geneva P., 85, Luray, Va., Aug. 8

Rhodes, James M., 62, Harrisonburg, Va., Aug. 14

Ritchie, Russell A., 92, Fulks Run, Va., July 27

Senger, Betty C., 66, Mount Solon, Va., Aug. 28

Sheetz, Margaret Elizabeth Clark, 86, Kenbridge, Va., Sept. 6

Sheffer, George A., Sr., 74, Harrisonburg, Va., July 23

Simmons, Dorothy Wright, 65, Charlottesville, Va., Aug. 28

Simmons, R. V., 93, Bridgewater, Va., Sept. 19

Sine, Howard H., 91, Edinburg, Va., Aug. 6

Smith, Ellen M., 95, Duncannon, Pa., July 4

Smith, Paul H., 94, Duncannon, Pa., Oct. 6

Spitzer, Martha W., 84, Harrisonburg, Va., July 27

Spoerlein, Guy, Somerset, Pa., Sept. 8

Stubbs, Lelia, 66, Peace Valley, Mo., Oct. 12

Stultz, Leota D., 86, Criders, Va., Aug. 29

Wellman, Floyd, Sebring, Fla., July 1

Whitmore, Harry, 82, Bridgewater, Va., Sept. 20

Williams, Marshall L., 87, Bridgewater, Va., Aug. 20

Licensings

Bucher, Samuel James, Heidelburg, Reistville, Pa., May 4

Doll, Earl, Hickory Grove, Dunkirk, Ind., Sept. 18

Fittery, Nancy Jean, Lititz, Pa., May 4

Fix, Brandy Elizabeth, New Enterprise, Pa., April 25

Lauer, Thomas R., Pleasant View, Red Lion, Pa., Aug. 18

Maurer, Joann, Palmyra, Pa., March 2

Runkle, Bradley R., Pleasant View, Red Lion, Pa., Aug. 18

Ordinations

Carmichael, Paula Sue, Upper Fall Creek, Middletown, Ind., June 9

Pastoral placement

Booth, Marilou, from interim to permanent, Pasadena, Calif.

Doll, Earl, to Hickory Grove, Dunkirk, Ind.

Longwell, Eric, from White Branch, Hagerstown, Ind., to Hanover, Pa.

Miller, Janet Ober, from South Bay Community, Redondo Beach, Calif., to La Verne Youth Team, La Verne, Calif.

Miller-Rieman, Ken, to Huntington, Ind.

Scholl, Emory, from Curryville, Pa., to Meyersdale, Pa.

Statler, Dana, continuing as pastor of youth, Lancaster, Pa., to pastor/chaplain, Faith Community Brethren Home, New Oxford, Pa.

234th BVS orientation unit placements

(Orientation was conducted at New Windsor, Md., July 18–Aug. 7.)

Abraham, Liz, Lenexa, Kan.; to Balkan Peace Team

Bolton, Lisa, Clitherall, Minn.; to Columbanus Community of Reconciliation, Belfast, Northern Ireland

Buckles, Jim, New Carlisle, Ohio; to Religious Coalition for Emergency Human Need, Frederick, Md.

Edwards, Alan, Tryon, N.C.; to Youth & Young Adult Ministries Workcamp coordinator, Elgin, Ill.

Giffei, Annika, Dattelin, Germany; to Bering-Omega Community, Houston, Tex.

Greenawalt, Daniel, Harrisonburg, Va.; to Brethren Historical Library & Archives, Elgin, Ill.

Hedges, Katie, Reistertown, Md.; to Camp Brethren Woods, Keezletown, Va.

Krause-Vilmar, Georg, Kassel, Germany; to Washington City Church of the Brethren Soup Kitchen, Washington, D.C.

Levin, Naomi, Myrtle Point, Ore.; to Asia Pacific Center for Justice/Peace, Washington, D.C.

Messick, Matt, Middletown, Pa.; to EYN Secondary School, Mubi, Nigeria (to start late 2000)

Morris, Kara, Churubusco, Ind.; to COBCOA/Youth and Young Adult Ministries, Elgin, Ill.

Murakami, Shoko, Hiroshima, Japan; to San Antonio Catholic Worker House, San Antonio, Tex.

Nagele, Nicole, Giengen, Germany; to Tri-City Homeless Coalition, Fremont, Calif.

Peschke, Matt, Augsburg, Germany; to Camp Stevens, Julian, Calif.

Shelly, Marion, Ephrata, Pa.; to Friendship Day Care, Inc, Hutchinson, Kan.

Smith, Leslie, Nokesville, Va.; to Women In Black, Belgrade, Serbia

Stump, Sharon, Rocky Mount, Va.; to Camp Ithiel, Gotha, Fla.

Sullivan, Erin, Helena, Mont.; to Ballysally Youth & Community Centre, Belfast, Northern Ireland

Voss, Hendrik, Elmshorn, Germany; to School of Americas Watch, Washington, D.C.

Wellgraf, Stefan, Berlin, Germany; to National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, Washington, D.C.

Yingling, Amy, Leola, Pa.; to Bridgeway, Lakewood, Colo.

Editorial

In the stillness of the evening

It is evening now. We are outdoors around a campfire. The flames have faded to embers and the stars shine bright all around. We sang "Kum Ba Ya" earlier, but now the singing is over and some have left the circle and gone off to bed. Alone with our thoughts and with our God, we feel the answer to our prayer—"my Lord" *has* come by here. All is peaceful. All is well.

Almost all is well. It is at these peaceful times under the stars that I feel closest to God. But it is also at these times that I begin to worry about the mistakes of the season just past, and to have little fears about what the future holds.

Hymnal: A Worship Book has a hymn that speaks to the doubts and fears that creep into peaceful times. It is number 551, "In the stillness of the evening." Written in 1971 by a Norwegian, Svein Ellingsen, it is composed in what is called the "style of new simplicity," which avoids the use of rhyme and metaphors. Instead, according to the Hymnal Companion, it describes "situations and difficulties of human life in such a way that one can recognize oneself in it, thus becoming better able to hear and understand the Christian message contained in the hymn."

I can recognize myself in it. "In the stillness of the evening/inner restlessness befalls me/which I cannot overpower./ In the midst of joy and gladness/ at the day's abundant blessings,/ silent pain is ever near me."

It is the evening of the year. It is only days now to new beginnings. There is joy and gladness all around us. So much is going so well.

We see it in our church. God has been good to our denomination. The darkest days of redesign are over, and some of us who are new in our staff positions have survived a year or two. It looks like things may work out all right after all. Giving is up, mission work is thriving, Congregational Life Teams are getting out to churches, and good things happen every day.

We see it in our nation. The economy just won't quit. Some are still hurting, farm prices are too low, and drought and floods have taken their toll. But for most in this country there is an almost unprecedented amount of prosperity. There are more jobs than people to fill them, so that more employers are having to take the radical step of paying a living wage to attract people.

But in the midst of all this prosperity, something is not quite right. "Inner restlessness befalls us, which we cannot overpower." Those who have prospered economically and materially are starting to ask, "Is that all there is?" They are starting to look for ways to spread the wealth to others, if for no other reason than to feel better about themselves. George Bush campaigns for "prosperity with a purpose," where nobody gets left behind, a fairly new idea among some of his friends. It is becoming fashionable for politicians to say it is not enough for our wallets to be full if our hearts are empty.

There is restlessness about the church as well. As a denomination, we're doing okay, but we could do better. There are doubts about collaboration, fears about mission styles, worries about how sexuality issues will be resolved. Many local congregations struggle for survival, and in some churches theological disputes take on a painful personal face.

It is the evening of the year. Between now and January 1 there is time to ponder our restlessness and fears, and to ask for God's help: "Jesus Christ's own word and promise/ comes to me, a gift of mercy:/ "All your sins are now forgiven!"/ Thus the pieces lying broken/ shall this very day be lifted/ into love's eternal wholeness."

Return with me to the evening campfire where God is close. It is in the peaceful darkness that I can turn over to God my doubts about the past, and hand to God my fears about the future. I can accept God's loving promise, "All your sins are now forgiven."

It is from this forgiveness in the dark that I gather courage for the light. In the peace of the evening I gain strength for the morning.

So it is my prayer that we will use this evening of the year to accept God's loving mercy for the mistakes of the recent past, and to feel God's forgiveness for the sins of the century past. Forgiven and strengthened, may we gather courage for the days ahead.

"If new days to me are given/ every hour with grace abounding/ will give hope of new beginnings./ Peace of mind protects my slumber./ Courage is restored for living./ I can meet the new tomorrow!"—Fletcher Farrar

2000 National Workcamps

Church of the
Brethren

Bold in Action

Humble in Spirit.....

Rich in Faith

Dominican Republic	**June 2-10**
Inter-generational, Harrisburg, PA	**June 14-18**
Indianapolis, IN	June 14-18
Richmond, VA	June 14-18
Castañer, Puerto Rico	June 19-26
Orlando, FL	June 19-25
Dominican Republic (BRF)	June 25-July 5
St. Croix 1, USVI	June 26-July 2
Habitat for Humanity, Americus, GA	June 26-July 2
Jamaica 1	July 2-8
St. Croix 2, USVI	July 3-9
Jamaica 2	July 9-15
Inspiration Center, Lake Geneva, WI	July 10-14
New Windsor, MD	July 10-14
Wichita, Kansas	July 24-30
Tijuana, Mexico	July 24-30
Denver, CO	July 24-30
Lend-A-Hand, KY	July 31-August 6
Washington DC	July 31-August 6
Crossnore, NC	July 31-August 6
Gould Farm, Monterrey MA	August 7-13
Pine Ridge Reservation, SD	August 7-13

For more information, call the Youth and Young Adult
Office fo the Church of the Brethren at 1-800-323-8039 or write to
Jacki and Alan , 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120
email: COBYouth_GB@BRETHREN.ORG

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